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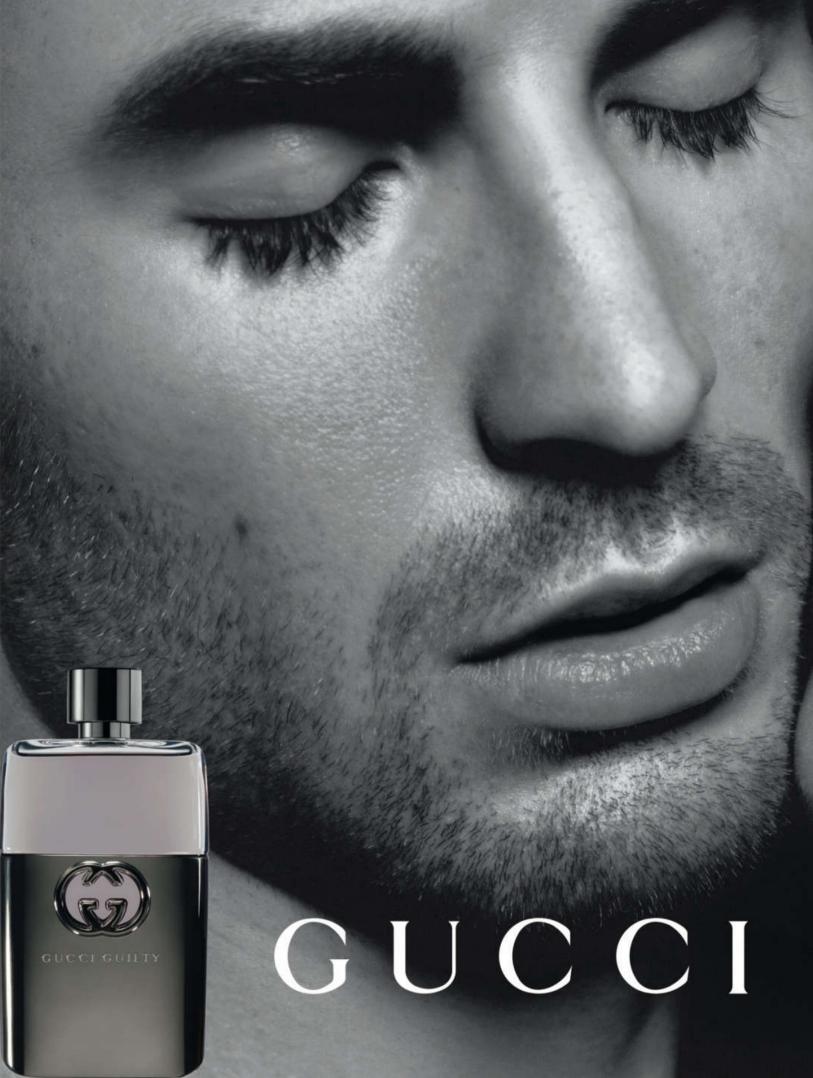


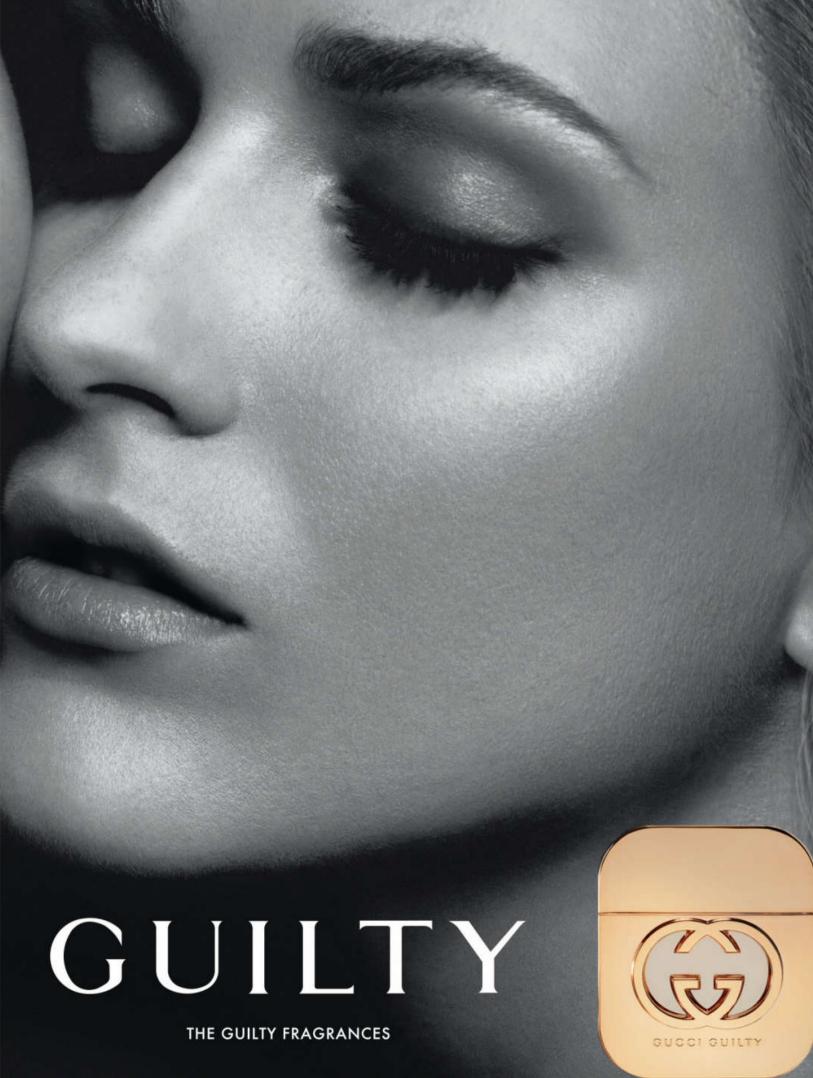
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STREET

Inner City Style
What they're wearing
in London's coolest
neighbourhood



Alexa Chung as you've never seen her before







p**83 Fashion, beauty, culture**What to wear, see and do right now. It's time to have some fun

DECEMBER

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RALPH LAUREN



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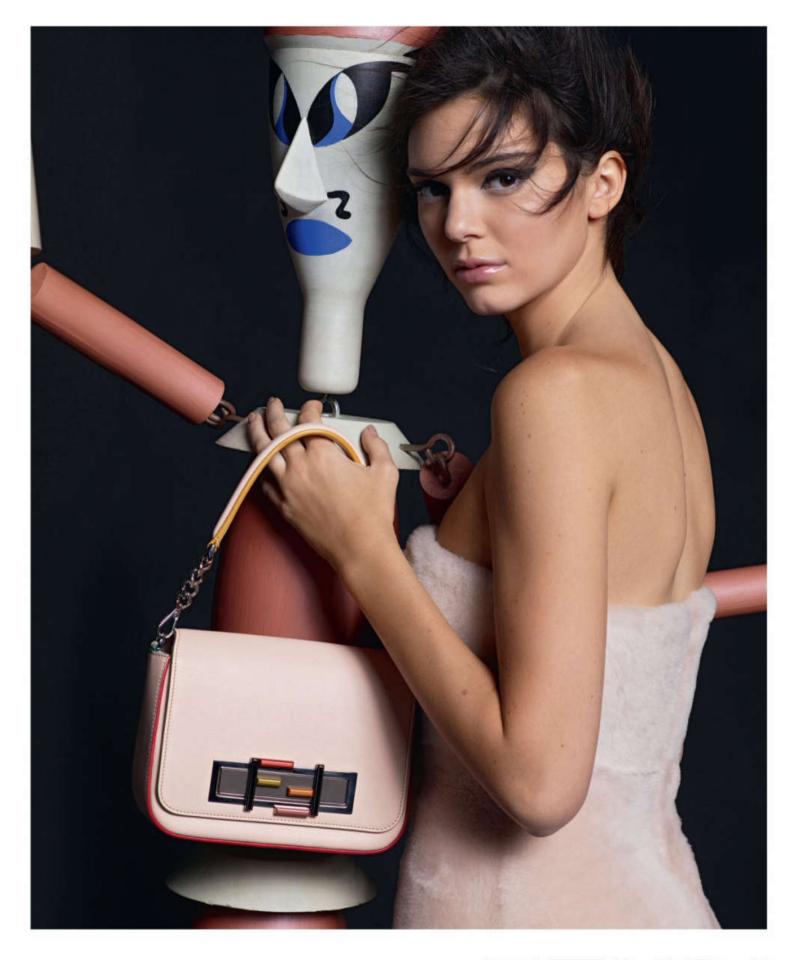






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ROBYN WILDER

Robyn became a writer to future-proof her later years: 'When I get old, I want to be like Enid Blyton, living in an ivy-strewn cottage, churning out books full of magic.' Currently on maternity leave, the London-based new mum experimented with a filter-free, uncurated life in Do You Have Folo? on p220.

#ELLEBookClub pick: The Magic Toyshop by Angela Carter



@ORBYN



HORDUR INGASON

Hordur Ingason is the Iceland-born, Denmarkdwelling photographer behind Retro Reborn on p252. After falling in love with pinhole (lensless) photography, curiosity led him to shoot fashion and portrait photography, alongside seasonal ad campaigns for cool Scandi brands such as Wood Wood. His life motto is, 'Just do it!' Unless 'it' is breakfast. Hordur doesn't do breakfast.

#ELLEBookClub pick: Situations by Sigurdur Gudmundsson **y**@EVE_BARLOW

EVE BARLOW

Glasgow-born Eve spent the past few years at the helm of the NME, before moving to LA to become a freelance pop culture writer. Her proudest career achievement to date is being blacklisted from a very famous pop star's afterparty. Eve writes about the phenomenon of career slashing in The Slash Factor on p224.

#ELLEBookClub: Save The Cat! by Blake Snyder



#ELLEINSPIRE
T'm scared of
failure, but I'm not
scared enough to
stop trying'

- RONDA ROUSEY



KAYLA ITSINES

At just 24, Australian personal trainer . Kayla has racked up a 3.7 million-strong Instagram following, with her stream of abflashing #fitspos and motivational quotes - averaging 38,000 likes each. Her advice to aspiring Insta-preneurs is to 'always remain honest with your followers'. On p283. Kayla tells us what she's honestly keeping in her fridge.

#ELLEBookClub pick: #GIRLBOSS by Sophia Amoruso

@@KAYLA_ITSINES



BEAUTY SCHOOL

THEY MADE THIS



Learn how to create the look of the season: vamp. Our how-to is on page 274. Plus, Pat McGrath's guide to party-perfect metallics (page 297), and the limited-edition beauty releases you need right now (page 289).

WHAT ELLE WEARS

From the editors to the interns, see what we wear to work every week. Visit elleuk.com/street-style and let Team ELLE show you how to style the trends.



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Compiled by: Gillian Brett, Photography: Jason Lloyd-Evans, Silvia Olsen.



CHAUMET



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DECEMBER | Continue |

here is one question I have asked more than any other over my lifetime and even now it perplexes me: 'What am I going wear today?' It's unique in that it matters to all women, of all ages and backgrounds, and the answer can be either very simple or very complicated.

On one level it's just about clothes, but on another it's an emotional rollercoaster, a cultural conundrum, a sexual statement or a political declaration. It boils down to a sartorial mission: 'This is me, this is what I am doing, this is what I stand for, this is my message.' Your choice of outfit can give you freedom or oppress you, make

you feel joyous or depressed (something Scarlett Curtis writes movingly about on page 310). An outfit can make you confident or rob you of your self-esteem. So the power of, 'What am I going to wear today?' fascinates me. I'm intrigued by what goes though your mind as you answer this every day.

We explore this in your December ELLE, by asking women around the country what goes through their minds when they open their wardrobe. The results on page 189 shine a spotlight on fashion-focused British women today.

Who knew nearly half of you have been reduced to tears by clothes? That 59% of you have a 'floordrobe', 72% of you invest in a new look for a new job, and 8% of you dress socks-first? In my career at ELLE, fashion plays a powerful role, not just visually and emotionally, but economically too. It is one of the UK's largest industries, worth £26 billion. Styles can reflect social changes, especially the state of play for women in society: note the resurgence of the gofaster flat shoe (see page 93 for this season's best). The ELLE team also let you into our most emotional fashion moments (spoiler alert: includes the day I was banned from wearing heels).

It concerns me when people worry too much about being on-trend or wearing the 'right' thing, because getting dressed should be fun and an adventure. The only style rule I apply is this: it's not about what you wear, but how you wear it. Fashion should not be about status; owning a luxury bag does not make you more stylish than that girl rock-



ing an H&M clutch. It should be empowering, and I was pleased that the survey revealed 67% of you dress for yourself. But it isn't easy, is it? Only a few rare mortals get it 'right' every day (I'm talking about you, cover star Alexa Chung, even though you tell us you have the same fashion anxieties as the rest of us on page 190).

Every day I have this chat with my wardrobe: **EDITOR:** 'How is it that I of all people have nothing to wear?'

WARDROBE: There is a huge choice. At least 10 black jackets (two of the same make), six million dresses, some of which aren't black, and more Capri pants than Joseph stocks worldwide. Plus

all these new jumpsuits, playsuits, dungarees. There must be something. Come on, let's not do this today.'

EDITOR: 'But nothing goes with anything. I am not sure how to put it all together.'

WARDROBE: 'You have professional fashion editors and stylists who can do this for you, let me meet them please.'

EDITOR: 'I can't bring them here, you fool. Look at the state of you. It's like a jumble sale at Harvey Nicks. I would die of shame if they saw this Prada/Topshop tangle. It's a hot mess.' WARDROBE: 'Like the inside of your head.'

EDITOR: 'Why can't we all wear silk navy PJs every day?' **WARDROBE:** (*sighs*) 'Here we go again... What about this Zara poloneck, these Roksanda trousers, and Whistles trainers?' **EDITOR:** 'I was photographed in that for What ELLE Wears on elleuk.com last week – I need to leave a bigger fashion gap. Do raise your game, you're just being lazy now.'

WARDROBE: 'Chunky poloneck, pleated metallic skirt, boots?' **EDITOR:** 'Bingo: AW15 nailed. Now keep the doors shut: no one needs to know about the black sweater mountain. Or the horror of handbag lucky dip. I am definitely going to plan tomorrow's outfit before I go to bed. You in?'

LORRAINE CANDY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ELLE world exclusive

SEE IT Watch Lisa Potter-Dixon's step-by-step tutorials at elleuk.com/elle-tv

BENEFIT THEY'RE REAL! TINTED I ASH PRIMER

Be the first to try the new Benefit eyelash primer months before everyone else

You have your new, first-look Benefit They're Real! Tinted Lash Primer on the cover of this issue, so now we're guessing you want to get the most out of it. Meet the ultimate make-up bag addition you never even knew you needed.

WEAR IT TWO WAYS



WITH YOUR MASCARA

Use Benefit They're Real! Tinted Primer before your regular mascara to dramatically lengthen and strengthen your lashes.







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Use Benefit They're Real! Tinted Primer on its own to define and tint your lashes, or for a natural, fluttery look.

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This primer's job is to define, separate and condition your lashes, creating the perfect base so your mascara can perform like a megastar. The best bit is the mink colour, which works equally well on its own or underneath your favourite mascara. It's lightweight and water-resistant, so you get maximum boosting potential all day – and into the night, too.

RECREATE these perfect weekend looks from ELLE Beauty School

Featuring ELLE's Beauty Director Sophie Beresiner and Benefit's Head Make-up & Trend Artist Lisa Potter-Dixon

FRIDAY NIGHT AN EASY STRAIGHT-FROM-WORK OPTION









- 1. Scribble a shimmer eye crayon on to the top lid and buff into skin using a soft brush.
- 2. Define with black kohl on the bottom waterline.
- 3 Apply your Benefit They're Real! Tinted Primer as a mascara base, to lengthen and separate lashes so they're ready for the next silen
- 4. Go over the top with a black mascara to achieve a false-lash effect.

SATURDAY TO NIGHT TWO COLOUR OPTIONS TO COVER ALL BASES









BI UF UNDER-SMOKE

- 1. Use blue eyeshadow and blend beneath the lower lash line.
- 2. Apply Benefit They're Real! Tinted Primer to bottom lashes first.
- 3. Go over the bottom lashes with blue mascara to make your lashes look extra-colourful.

GREEN LINER LOOK

- 1. Apply green gel liner across the top lid, taking it out to a feline flick.
- ${\bf 2.}$ Apply Benefit They're Reall Tinted Primer to boost the effects of the coloured mascara.
- 3. Once the primer is dry, apply two coats of your favourite coloured mascara on the top and bottom lashes.

SUNDAY SELFIE THE PERFECT DOWNTIME LOOK







- Apply mineral foundation to even out skin tone and create a breathable base, then use concealer under the eyes and wherever needed.
- 2. Fill brows with powder for definition and ensure you don't look too underdone. Fix with brow gel.
- 3. Dab pearlescent shadow into the inner corners of the eyes to wake them up.
- 4. Finish with Benefit They're Real! Tinted Primer on its own to give your lashes definition without looking like you're wearing make-up.



SELLEFIESUNDAY COMPETITION

Recreate your best stay-in Sunday look using your sELLEfie frame, free with this issue, to stand a chance to Win a #sELLEfieSunday breakfast with Beauty Director Sophie Beresiner and Benefit Head Make-Up & Trend Artist Lisa Potter-Dixon. Five runners-up will receive a goodie bag. Upload your #sELLEfie to elleuk. com/sELLEfieSunday,

sit back and cross your fingers. The winner will be hand-picked by Sophie and Lisa. Good luck!

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Terms and conditions apply. Closing date is 2 December 2015. The winner will be drawn on 3 December 2015 and must be available on 6 December 2015. Transport and accommodation costs will not be included. Winner must be able to get to London on 6 December 2015. SELLEfie frames are not included in bumper-pack or digital editions of ELLE. However, entries without the frame will still be considered if entries are tagged with #sELLEfieSunday on Instagram.

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Forecast: The Saturn Sisters Stefanie Iris Weiss and Sherene Schostak

It's your birthday, Scorpio!

SAGITTARIUS

23 NOVEMBER – 22 DECEMBER

Your month to: Take over Although the first half of November could inspire some rare introversion, you'll feel a major push to socialise during the remainder of the month. The new moon (on the 11th) was made for dreaming and scheming your next big launch. Relationships hit a serious climax under the full moon on the 25th.

Date for your diary: 13th
See the bigger picture; there's

more here than meets the eye.

CAPRICORN

23 DECEMBER - 20 JANUARY

Your month to: Get social
Your popularity is on a crazy
upswing at the moment.
The new moon on the 11th is
perfect for planning your next
six months of long-term goals.
You'll have more than enough
support to make it all happen
- both online and off. Expect
a jam-packed schedule for the
last week of November.
Date for your diary: 15th
You can achieve a lot today.

AQUARIUS

21 JANUARY – 19 FEBRUARY

Your month to: Think career You're getting a rare chance to set your priorities straight this month. Focus on the prize when the new moon comes to grant your wishes on the 11th. You might be lured away by long-distance adventures for a bit, but the full moon on the 25th will insist that you land back home to soak up the love. Date for your diary: 26th Be aware, someone is fibbing.

PISCES

20 FEBRUARY – 20 MARCH

Your month to: Be intuitive You're learning the art of going with the flow. The new moon on the 11th brings the ideal opportunity to surrender to the unknown and trust that everything is going your way. Plus, you have plenty of new ideas for the rest of 2015. **Date for your diary: 19th** Socially, you're so hot right now.

ARIES

21 MARCH - 20 APRIL

Your month to: Compromise
Sex and transformation
are your dual obsessions for
the first half of the month.
The new moon on the 11th
invites you to set intentions
for passion and intimacy.
You're learning how to adjust,
adapt and accommodate.
Be careful of what you say
near the full moon on the 25th.
Date for your diary: 12th
Don't push your own agenda.

TAURUS

21 APRIL - 21 MAY

Your month to: Put love first November is all about getting to the next level in love. The new moon asks you to set your intentions for your relationships, so think ahead. Your daily schedule will compete for your attention; finding an appropriate work/ life balance may not be easy. Watch your expenses near the full moon on the 25th - no cute holiday outfit is worth going into credit-card debt for. Date for your diary: 23rd Try a new workout regime.

GEMINI

22 MAY - 21 JUNE

Your month to: Be town crier There's a reason you're called the messenger of the zodiac, Gemini. Nobody says it better than you. November is all about working smarter, not harder, especially around the new moon on the 11th. The real excitement builds closer to the full moon in your stars on the 25th. All your life lessons of the past six months come to a head; the healing part of the journey has officially begun.

Date for your diary: 2nd It's time to play private eye.



24 OCTOBER – 22 NOVEMBER Your month to:

Dig deep

It's all about starting fresh this month, Scorpio.
There is a new moon in your stars on the 11th, one that's beckoning you to start with a totally clean slate. Wild inspiration is spurring you on. Plus, the full moon brings some major transformation and insights into your own secrets near the 25th.
Confront your deepest fears in order to totally obliterate them.

Date for your diary: 10th Shed everything that no longer serves you.

READ IT

To find out what your stars hold every day, check out elleuk.com/daily

CANCER

22 JUNE - 22 JULY

Your month to: Fall in love
November brings an amorous
buzz. The new moon on the
11th is ripe with opportunities
to either rekindle a standing
affair or start something
totally new. You're also
balancing a lot of family
and domestic demands,
but don't let them detract from
your well-deserved downtime.
The full moon lights up your
imagination on the 25th.
Date for your diary: 27th
Manage your moods.

LEO

23 JULY - 23 AUGUST

Your month to: Mingle
Your social life takes a radical
turn for the better this month.
The first half of the month is
decidedly more low-key, but
don't let that fool you. Get all
of your alone time out of the
way near the new moon on the
11th. By the full moon on the
25th, you'll be more than ready
for the limelight again - the
holiday season is so close.

Date for your diary: 4th Pull out the stops and shine.

VIRGO

24 AUGUST – 23 SEPTEMBER

Your month to: Be savvy
Finances take centre stage this
month; look at achieving a
healthy balance and make
your money work harder for
you. The new moon on the
11th is perfect for launching
dazzling career initiatives.
The full moon on the 25th calls
for social networking, so tweet it.
Date for your diary: 6th

LIBRA

24 SEPTEMBER – 23 OCTOBER

Streamline your life.

Your month to: Think of you You're the 'It' girl on multiple levels, so work your magic. On the 11th, use the new moon to create financial goals that take you into next spring. The full moon on the 25th could easily bring an exotic adventure or last-minute getaway - be passport-ready. Date for your diary: 8th Two words: spa day.

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#ELLEALEXA

Alexa Chung

THE COVER BY NUMBERS

WOMAN OF THE MONTH EBELE OKOBI



Ebele Okobi, 41, is a lawyer and Head of Public Policy for Africa at Facebook. She works with governments and not-for-profit organisations across 47 countries in Africa, to create change in laws and policy. Ebele lives in London with her husband, Richard, and their four children.

My mother is a huge inspiration to me. I know that's a cliche, but the joy she gets from her work as a neonatal intensive care nurse is awe-inspiring. She raised five children, and each of us always felt central to her life. She's the reason I've never felt guilty for being a working mother.

The internet never stops evolving. Most governments around the world are still figuring out social media. I find it fascinating to be in a position to help shape the laws around it.

Don't just moan about a problem, be a part of the solution. Someone once told me, 'In business and life, take the problem to the solution.' If there is something you think is unjust, are you going to waste time complaining about it, or are you going to try to fix it?

I get to meet some incredible people through my work.

There's a group called She Leads Africa in Nigeria. It was started by two young women in order to shine a spotlight on female leaders and entrepreneurs, particularly those in tech, and gives them the ability to reach larger markets and get funding.

Tina Fey is my spirit guide. I think she is funny and amazing. I've read her book Bossypants three times. It's not an official career guide but it has really interesting and useful guidance on how to navigate the world of work.

Being a working mum isn't always easy. And that's OK. Sometimes books targeted at women who work don't call out the bullsh*t - they pretend that if you try really hard, it will be awesome. Margaret Heffernan's The Naked Truth doesn't do this - she's very direct, but she's funny, too.

Sometimes the advice people give you is about themselves, not you. When I left a prestigious law firm to volunteer for NGOs, some people thought it sounded irresponsible or frivolous. I think you can take advice in, but understand that what's valuable to you may not be what's animating the advice you're receiving. You need to put it into context for yourself.

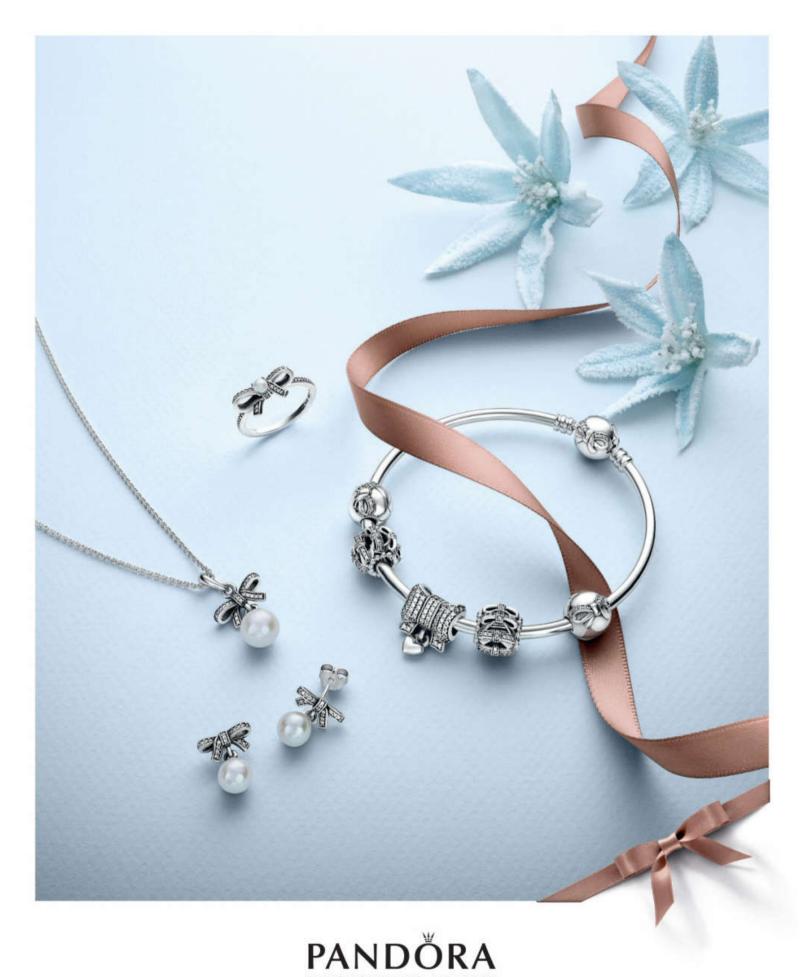


with Alexa

THE COVER-SHOOT PLAYLIST

You're Not Good Enough by Blood Orange Dreams by Fleetwood Mac Friday I'm In Love by The Cure

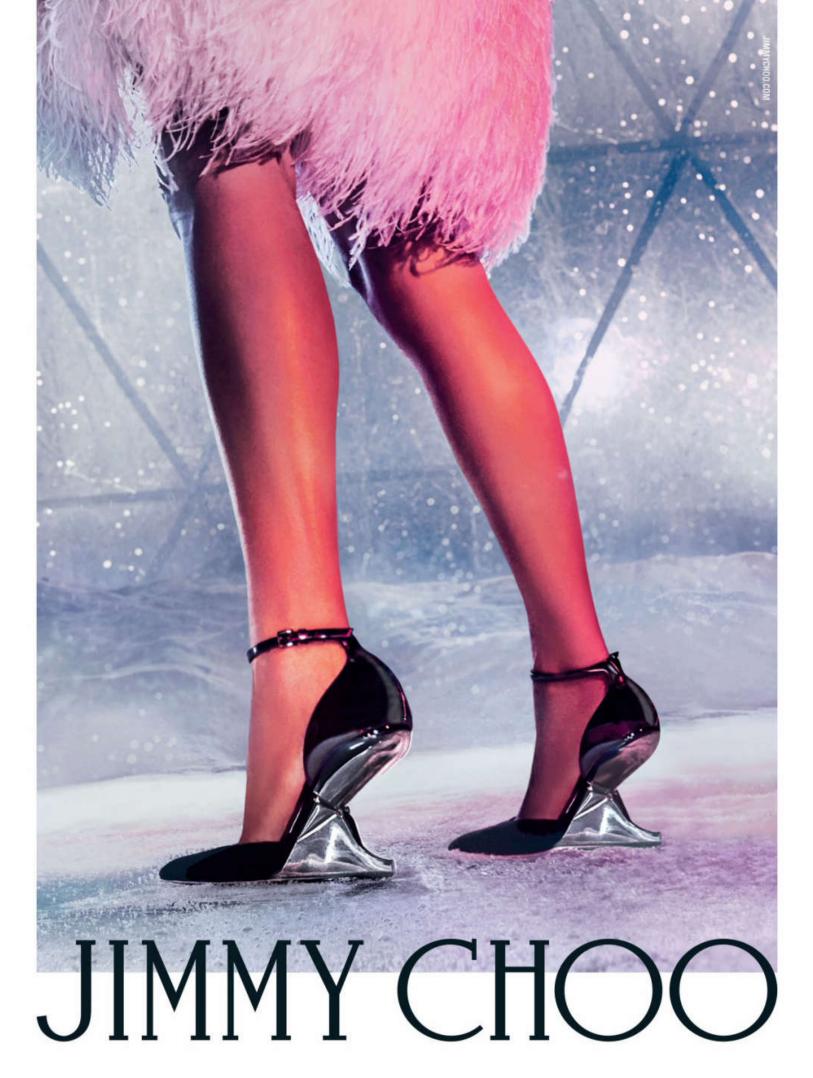
HEAR IT To listen to the songs from the shoot, follow ELLEUK on Spotify



UNFORGETTABLE MOMENTS

Blery for every occasion, hand finished from sterling s

Beautiful jewellery for every occasion, hand finished from sterling silver. Celebrate your Christmas moments. Be inspired at pandora.net









GOING-OUT SPECIAL

86







the art OF COLOUR



FROM OUR HANDS TO YOUR HANDS

IN YOUR HANDS, IT'S MORE THAN JUST A HAIRCOLOUR, IT'S A BEAUTY RITUAL THAT CAN ENHANCE YOUR LOOK OR RADICALLY TRANSFORM IT. HAIR IS INFUSED WITH COLOUR THAT IS CHIC, STYLISH AND TOTALLY STUNNING. GLAMOUR IN ALL ITS SPLENDOUR. THE ART OF COLOUR SIGNED L'ORÉAL PARIS, HAIR COLOURIST SINCE 1909.







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Pointed flats: you'll want these for the new season, not just for Christmas





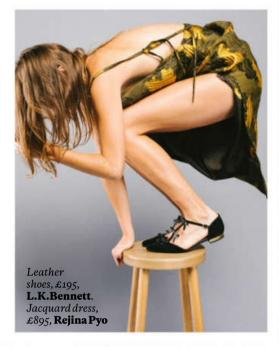
Dance all night in this season's coolest shoes

No treading lightly here. Wear these with bare legs or team with a maxi dress



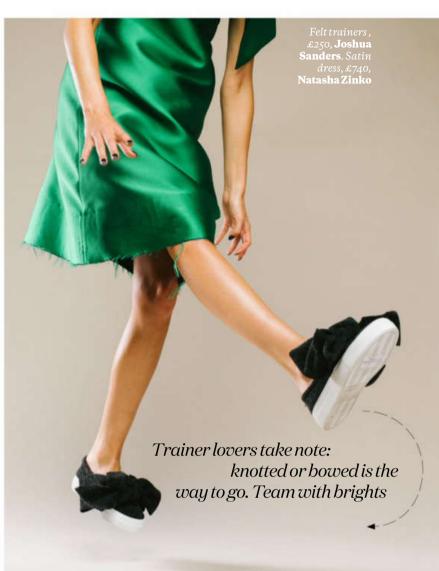
GOING-OUT SPECIAL

O O





The shoe of the moment gets a metallic finish





JIMMY CHOO



THE ORIGINAL FRAGRANCE

GOING-OUT SPECIAL



Girlie dress meets boy-style monk shoes with a glittery flourish





Metallic on Lurex teamed with brocade? Footwear doesn't get more festive

Photography: Mehdi Lacoste. Hair and make-up: Desmond Grundy at Carol Hayes Management, using Bumble and bumble and Mac Cosmetics. Manicure: Roxanne Campbell, using OPI. Model: Melissa Bell at Select Model Management. For shopping details, see Address Book.







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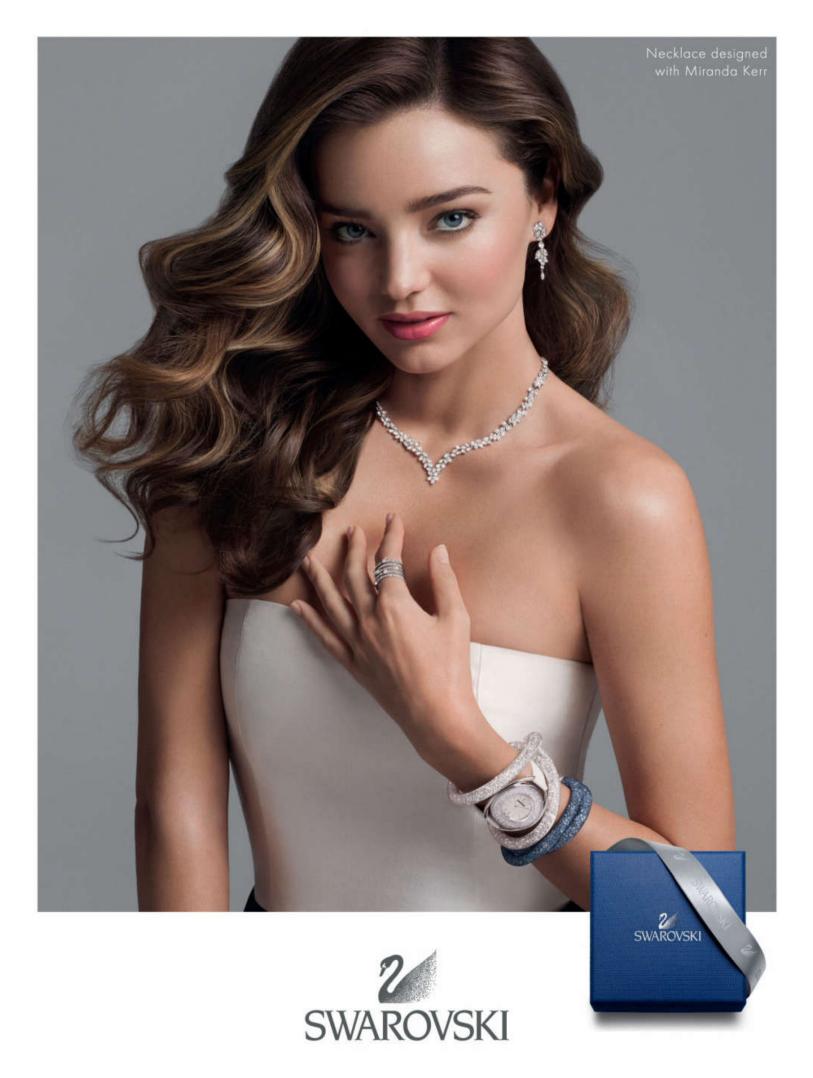






Collection from £74





FENDER



Karl Lagerfeld credits the strong women at Fendi's helm with the brand's perennially cool ethos. On the eve of his 50th anniversary as the brand's creative director (yes, really!), he introduces Rebecca Lowthorpe to his modern muses backstage in Milan

Photography Donald Gjoka

Above: Karl Lagerfeld with models (L-R) Joan Smalls, Karlie Kloss and Doutzen Kroes. Right, and above centre: Fendi AW15 am not a woman!' Karl Lagerfeld declared somewhat unnecessarily backstage after his AW15 Fendi show in Milan last February. 'I like to be surrounded by women. I like the style, taste and talent of women because I don't wear the clothes. That's why I'm not crazy to have boys or men as assistants when I am doing dresses: I don't want to discuss dresses with men. All the women here, they are all great. They made Fendi once again a powerhouse.'

The living legend that is Lagerfeld (who has also clocked up 33 years at Chanel, his most famous design gig) holds the record for the longest-standing collaboration in fashion history with Fendi - it's been 50 years since he first became its creative director. 'I should be in the Guinness Book,' he told me. 'No other designer has worked that long.'

'ALL THE WOMEN

HERE, THEY

ARE ALL GREAT.

THEY MADE FENDI,

ONCE AGAIN,

A POWERHOUSE'



Top left: A model strikes a pose backstage Left: Karlie Kloss

Strong women are at the centre of Karl's life and work, which to him are one and the same thing, but at Fendi he's referring to one in particular: Silvia Venturini Fendi, the house's creative director of accessories and the men's lines. Her grandparents, Edoardo and Adele, founded Fendi in 1925. Their five daughters, Paola, Anna, Franca, Carla and Alda, then entered the company and transformed it from

a fur and leather house into a leading international readyto-wear and accessories brand powered by women. Silvia, daughter of Anna, now in her fifties, oversaw the creation of the Fendi Baguette bags that catapulted the brand to ubercovetable status in 1997. That was the first time the words 'waiting list' entered the fashion lexicon. The Baguette's phenomenal success made Fendi attractive to potential buyers and, in 2001, the luxury-goods giant LVMH acquired the brand.

Backstage before the show, Silvia was surveying the running boards (photographs of the show's models in their outfits, pinned to a board in order of appearance). Was she happy with the collection Mr Lagerfeld had designed? 'Yes, it's very powerful but with personality - just what Fendi should be



today,' she said. And would she be wearing any of it - the fluffy beige trousers hewn from sheepskin, say, or one of the Micro Peekaboo bags dangling a supersized fur Karlito charm? She laughed. Dressed headto-toe in black, her only embellishment an array of her daughter Delfina Delettrez's jewellery, Silvia said: 'I always dress like this and in 10 years I will still be like this.' So why does she think Fendi's relationship

with Lagerfeld has stood the test of time in an industry that craves the young and the new? 'Because he is the most inventive and curious creator of clothes and he has such discipline!'

At that moment, the other strong women in Lagerfeld's life rocked up. Amanda Harlech, his muse and chief collaborator (on both Fendi and Chanel), and Charlotte Stockdale, Fendi's stylist, the latter wearing a cloud of frizzy Mongolian shearling. Of the 52 show looks, I asked each of them to choose one outfit they want to take home. After much deliberation, Harlech chose a black leather skirt with articulated side panels pictured with fluffy shearling boots and a skinny-rib poloneck. 'It's clever, sleek, dynamic and modern, but I'd wear it with trainers,' she said.

'Oh god!' cried Stockdale, alarmed by further decision-making after 48 hours of doing just that on almost no sleep. 'Don't make me choose just one look,' she pleaded, unable to decide between the gigantic cream shearling coat (modelled by Lindsey Wixson) or the 'really practical' curvy short black coat (as seen on new face Mica Arganaraz).

But back to Lagerfeld and the

power of strong women: 'I like to have those girls around me, otherwise I would be bored doing it alone - it is important to be surrounded by the right people. Charlotte is great, Amanda is great, Silvia is great. And Alessia, please don't forget her, she runs the studio here at Fendi and she is excellent. If I'm not surrounded by this kind of person, it's not worth it.'

Finally, braving the question one should never ask Mr Lagerfeld, being one of the last of his generation still working in fashion, let alone at the top of his game: why still do it? To which he replied: 'I love working. I'm very lucky that I can do whatever I want in the most divine conditions in a period when others have their success behind them. I am doing better now in everything in the world than 20 or 30 years ago,' he said. Adding only, 'Not everyone is born to survive.'>







50 **YEARS**Karl Lagerfeld has been with Fendi

32 bird of paradise flowers in 32 bags

FUN WITH FEND

The inspiration for the collection
Artist Sophie Taeuber-Arp's graphic prints



WV NO
wore which bag?
From top: Joan Smalls carried
the Micro Peekaboo,
Lily Donaldson carried

Lily Donaldson carried the Peekaboo clutch and Kendall Jenner carried the Micro 3Baguette.

AW14 The season Fendi used drones to film the show live

ICONIC BAGS: 2Jours, mini 2Jours, 3Jours, Selleria tote, Zucca Bowling Bag, By The Way, Mini By The Way, Peekaboo, Medium Peekaboo, Mini Peekaboo, Micro Peekaboo, Peekaboo Clutch, Baguette, 3Baguette, Mini 3Baguette and Micro Baguette





2007 The year Fendi hosted the first fashion show visible from space



There are 5 bag charm styles: Karlito, Bag Bugs, ABCharm, Micro Bag Bugs and Pom-Pom

hat is the most popular charm globally? The Karlito 3 sizes: Karlito,
Mini Karlito and, new for AW15, the Super Karlito

22 coats went down the runy

14 different fabrics: Felt, leather, cotton, wool, silk, pony hair, angora, mink, shearling, suede, astrakhan, cashmere, fox and kidassia goat

More than 200 stores carry Fendi worldwide



ISSEY MIYAKE

L'EAU D'ISSEY





Left: Polvester dress, £95, and velvet shoes, £79, both Topshop. Metal earrings. £7.50, Freedom at Topshop, Leather bag, £140, Kurt Geiger. Right: Polyester-mix dress, £225, Ganni, Patentleather shoes. £135, F-Troupe. Silk scarf, £90, Kimberly Stewart for Rockins

Easy party dresses AND 10 WAYS TO STYLE THEM

This year, your shortcut to the season's evening glamour does not involve a cocktail frock.

Try sultry sheer layers, delicate embroidery and a hint of shimmer instead

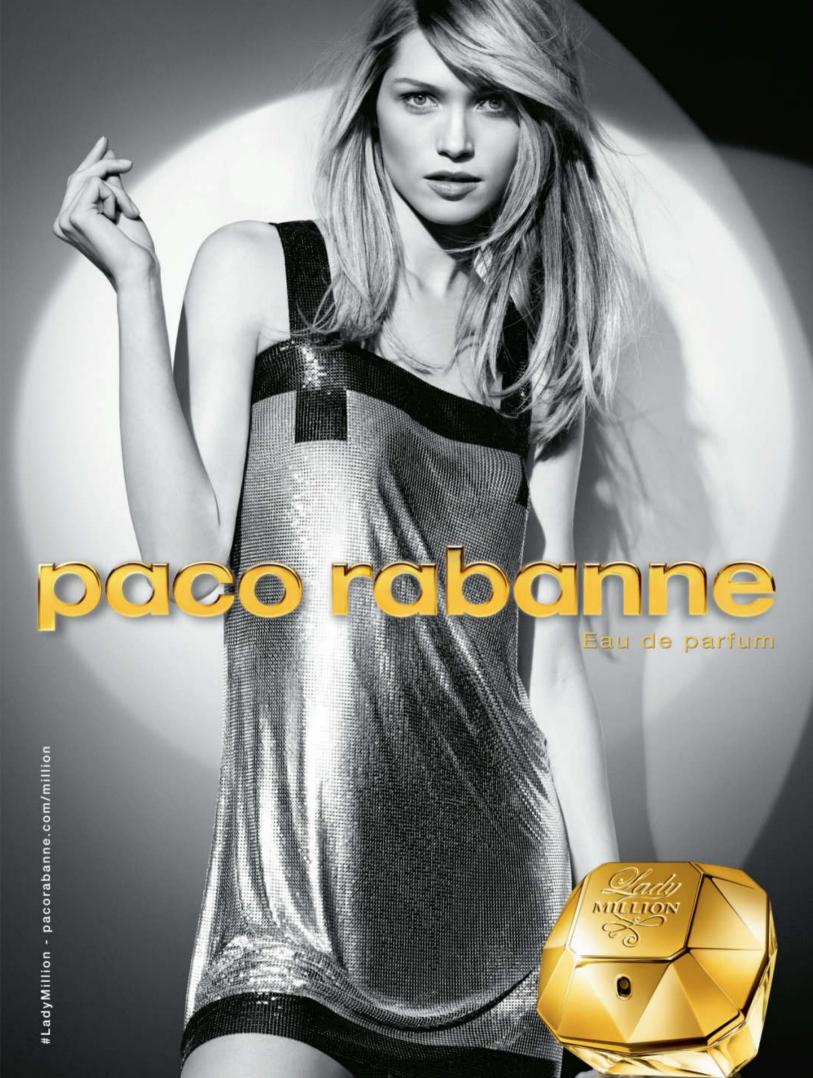
Photography **Cameron McNee**

Styling **Harriet Stewart**



No need to display arms if your legs are proudly on show with this short hemline.







TIP Switch your belt for a knotted scarf, and heels for trainers; it will add attitude to any party dress.



ring (model's left scarf, £150, Rockins. Cotton socks, £8 for three pairs, adidas



Play on the simplicity of an LBD with minimal accessories and patent shoes.





favourite new-season dresses, go to elleuk. com/fashion





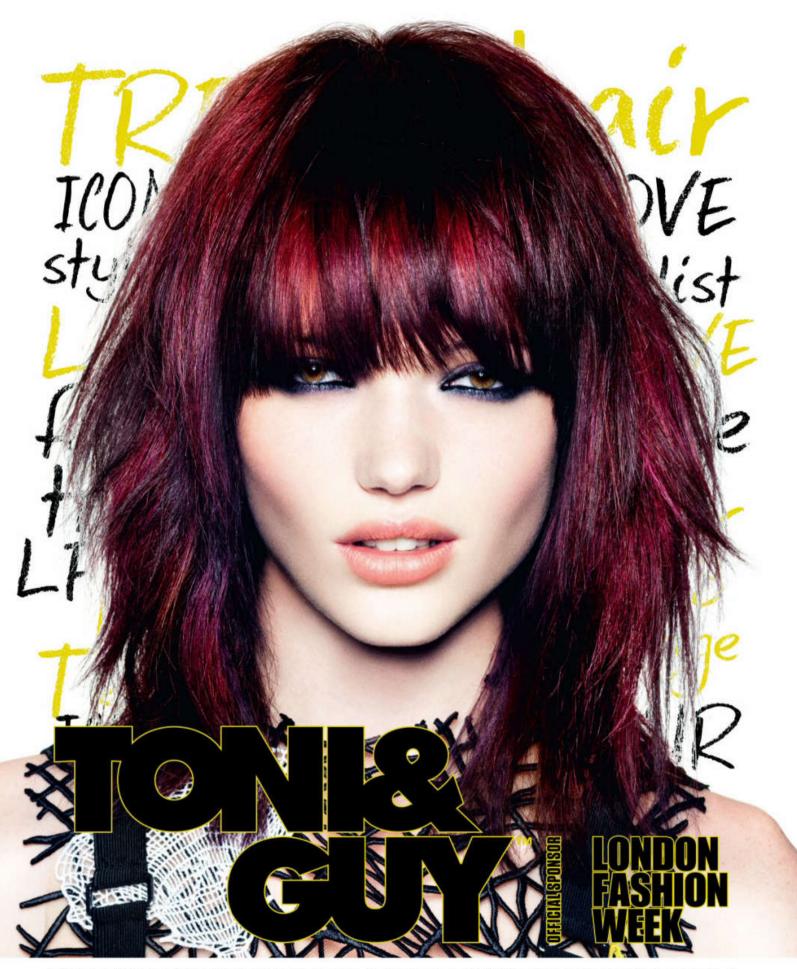
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from going over the top.









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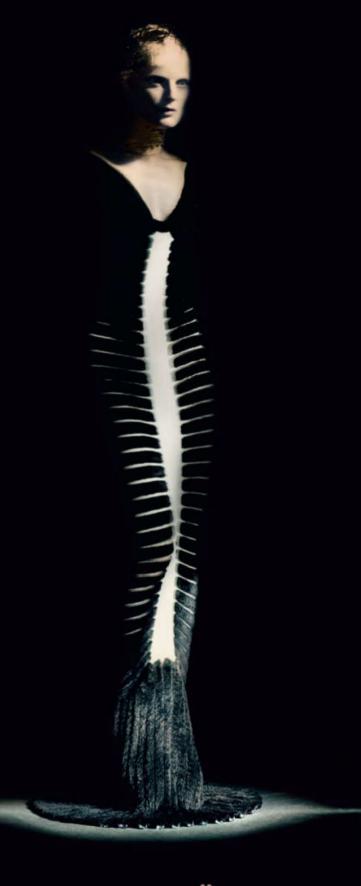


EDITOR'S FAVOURITES



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Photography: Robert Harper. Additional photography: 3 Objectives. Hair and make-up: Carolyn Gallyer at CLM Hair And Make Up, using Chanel Sublimage L'Extrait and Christmas Makeup and Bumble and bumble. Manicure: Ami Streets at LMC Worldwide, using Chanel Christmas 2015 and Body Excellence Hand Cream. Model: Vita Kan at Select Model Management. For shopping details, see Address Book.





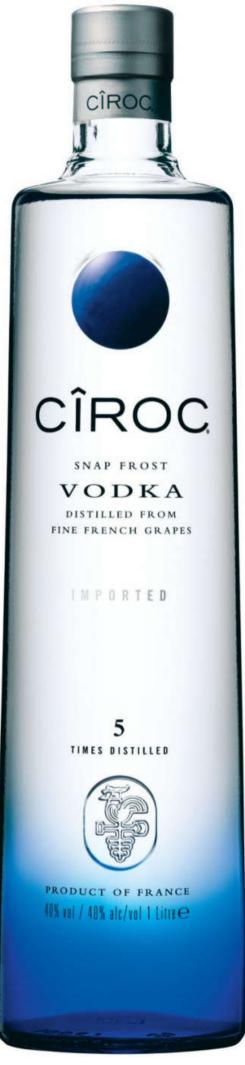
ALAÏA

PARIS

EAU DE PARFUM







UP NIGHT

JILLIAN HERVEY

Singer, Lion Babe Ultimate new-season party piece A Gogo Philip choker. Best party outfit A black dress never fails. Favourite cocktail It all depends on the

occasion, but if the party spirit is in the air, a spicy margarita (picante de la casa).

Song guaranteed to get you on the dancefloor Pony by Ginuwine. Party make-up tip

It's all about the eves - go for a simple cat-eye with a liquid liner and mascara.



GRACE COBB Stylist Dream new-season party piece

The pink Prada empress dress from the AW15 show. **Fantasy Christmas**

dinner partner David Niven, if my

We asked our **dream guest list** from the worlds of fashion, film, beauty and music to help us **survive the** party season, with what to wear, who to invite and how to know when it's time to go home Compiled by Billie Bhatia and Gillian Brett



Dream party era

Jane Austen Regency period. Amazing petticoats, champagne glasses, classical dancing and carriages at dawn (literally).

Fantasy dance partner

My boyfriend. He can dance, unlike me. Top party destination

I love Blacks Club in Soho. And Ballymaloe House in Cork, Ireland, is always a lot of fun.





JENNA COLEMAN

Actress Dream new-season party piece

Anything from Vilshenko. Favourite cocktail

A Saint Germain Des Prés from the Experimental Cocktail Club, London. as it's spicy and has a nice kick. Or a vodka sour - I'm convinced the egg white eases the hangover.

Make-up trick

Tip your head upside down and use Oribe Dry Texturizing Spray, £29, for bed-head hair. If in doubt, red lipstick (Lipstick Queen Velvet Rope, £35, right). Three things you always have in your bag

Keys, ID (because that still happens) and iPhone. Dream party era

I'd love to party in New York in the 1920s. There is an unfading glamour about the decade - in my head I'm stepping into Baz Luhrmann's The Great Gatsby. After reading Patti Smith's Just Kids, I'd also love to hang round in the Hotel Chelsea in the late Sixties and Seventies, and watch the meeting of great minds.

GOING-OUT SPECIAL

Acrylic bags (from

top), £1,070, £975, and £1,280, all Edie Parker at net-aporter.com



and Creative Director, Être Cécile Dream new-season party piece

YASMIN SEWELL

Fashion Consultant

I'm not usually one for sequins or traditional festive glitz, but this beautiful Emilia Wickstead dress (above right), with glimmering gold thread running through it, caught my eye. I love that it's ladylike and elegant, yet decidedly cool.

Best party outfit

It's from the night I met my husband, Kyle. I was hosting a party for Acne, and was wearing a stonecoloured, Grecian-style, backless linen dress. I was tanned and remember feeling really great in it.



Make-up Artist

Dream new-season

party piece

I love Saint Laurent's new leopard-print cape (left). Evervone needs one.

Three things you always have in your bag

My Filmstar Bronze & Glow, £49, for killer cheekbones; Full Fat Lashes, £22 (I'm a mascara addict); and Rock 'n' Kohl, £19, for mesmerising eyes.

Fantasy party era

I love the glamorous makeup, style and music of the Seventies. The Studio 54 generation of Jerry Hall, Bianca Jagger and Diana Ross would have been an incredible crowd to be immersed in. I take a lot of inspiration from that era.

YASMIN SEWELL'S TOP 5 TIPS FOR FINDING THE

- 1. No matter how much mulled wine you've had, don't forgo a coat. An exposed back and cold wind are never a good combination.
- 2. Know the dress code, and easily avoid feeling over- or under-dressed.
- 3. Wear the appropriate underwear! If you're going for something slinkier or more revealing than usual, you want to know you're covered... especially if you end up freestyle dancing.
- **4.**Try vintage! Chances are you'll end up with something far more original and interesting.
- 5. If you're not the dress-wearing type, or want to try something new, go for a tailored look.



ELLE'S PARTY-DRESSING



It's not heels you need under your desk - it's statement earrings the modern way to dress up your look. Try Marni for extra jazz.



If you're not a girlieshoe person, dress up **brogues** or flats with sparkly or bold socks. Topshop gets our vote



Pick a small, practical handbag with shoulder strap – juggling clutch, cocktail and canapé all evening is not cool Bag of choice: Fendi.



Underwear is not an afterthought. It's crucial to wear the right bra - and that goes for when you're trying on the dress, too.



Avoid courts if your dress is floor-length, as this can make your feet look hoof-like. Open-toed, strappy styles work better. We heart Manolo, always.

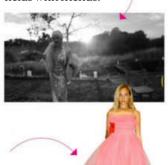


The new slip dress is a big AW15 trend. Keep the entire outfit tonal and the accessories simple, then toss on an oversized cashmere coat à la MaxMara.





ALICE TEMPERLEY Designer Dream new-season party piece The Temperley London Antique Gold Tamir Dress (below). Best ever party outfit A mirrored dress I made for my birthday. Top party destination I host an annual party at my house in Somerset. Nothing beats dancing in the fields with friends.





Michael Jackson.

Song guaranteed to get you

on the dancefloor P.Y.T. by

MOLLY GODDARD Designer

Dream new-season party piece My AW15 pink Alice dress (right). Top party destination Carnival! Either Notting Hill or Barbados. Best ever party My leaving party two years ago. The house was full; we swam in our pop-up pool and danced all night. Your party trick Really good bad dancing.



DEAN AND DAN CATEN Creative Directors, Dsquared2

Dream new-season party piece The long white dress with delicate drapes from our AW15 collection. Best party outfit A black

double-breasted jacket, white shirt, blue jeans, lace-up shoes and black glasses. Mixing casualwear with an elegant style is always the best choice. Top party destination St Moritz is a magical place. The secret to a good party is... The guest list. Every party should have the coolest and the funniest people.







good party is... Friends, spectacle **Dream Christmas** dinner partner

The secret to a

and surprises.

Frida Kahlo.



HENRY HOLLAND

Designer Ultimate new-season party piece Gucci's embellished lilac leather jacket and flares. Song guaranteed to get you on the dancefloor B*tch Better Have My Money by Rihanna. Fantasy dance partner Florence Welch she goes mental on the dance floor. Best ever night out At Coachella, at our

house in the desert.

Ultimate new-season party piece Loewe's metallic dress

Song guaranteed to get you on the dancefloor Rock Steady by

Dream Christmas dinner partner My fella [Editors frontman]

Tom Smith]. We got married two years ago on 22 December,

EDITH BOWMAN DJ and ELLE's Music Editor

(left) - it's got a bit of Studio 54 about it. LOVE.

so Christmas with him and our boys is just heaven.

Aretha Franklin. What an absolute tune.

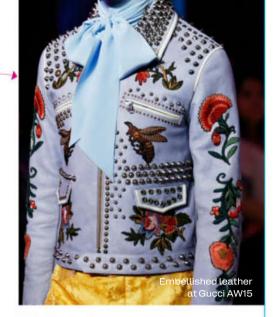
Photograph

from Daisy

Lowe's 18th

birthday by

Kai Z Feng





Ultimate new-season party piece

at a party wearing the magic-mushroom dress from my AW15 collection. Best ever party outfit

Swimming trunks, a pyjama top, Gucci lizard loafers and Cutler And

Song guaranteed to get you on the dancefloor Anything by Ghostface Killah. Signature dance move

A gin and Pedrino.



Designer

I would love to see a guest

Gross sunglasses.

The Moonwalk. Favourite cocktail





Ultimate new-season party piece Lanvin's dinner jacket. I would wear it with black skinny jeans from Acne and white Nike Air Jordans.

Best ever party It was when I first shot for Burberry, I was invited to the Prorsum show and after-party in Milan - back in 2007, I think.

On your Christmas wish-list A cashmere blanket coat, and to be with family.

Top party destinations Tokyo, London and Thailand.





Try **light knitwear** (we love J.Crew) and a chic skirt, or a white shirt over a party dress. half buttoned down and tied at the waist.



The ankle is the new erogenous zone for AW15. Go for an **elegant** sort of sexy with ankle-grazing trousers and a fitted jacket (see Emilia Wickstead on how to wear).





A **red lip** instantly transforms your face from under-dressed to party-ready.





Blister plasters. We have all been there: we wear new shoes, we wince in pain all night and resent them by 1am. No pain, all the gain.



Don't feel resigned to an LBD. Ditch the black and wear colour, be it princess pastel, moody mulberry or hue du jour blush pink. Edit has got you covered.



Add a hair accessory, an AW15 trend, from Prada hair brooches to Dolce & Gabbana headbands. Dress from the top down.



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Shirt dress, £270, Raphaëlla Riboud

3. Yolke

Friends and former Temperley London colleagues Anna Williamson and Ella Ringner wanted to create an affordable lifestyle label filled with vibrant prints, so they launched Yolke in 2013. They are now offering limited-edition, bi-monthly lines: the first of these ranges, 'Libertine', features handembroidered eyes.

Silk pyiamas, £280

(bottom), both Yolke

(top), and £270

2. Raphaëlla Riboud

Riboud mixes US sportswear with Parisian chic. Cue oversized boyfriend shirts with lace inserts, soft bras and cami shorts in rich, jewel shades, louche leopard-print pyjamas, as well as smoking jackets and slippers for decadent comfort.

The same

HOW TO STYLE THE LOOK

Introduce your PJs to the real world with these accessories



Gold-plated necklace, £450, Uribe



Faux-leather bag, £15, Monki

Acrylic bag, £1,350, Edie



1. Olivia von Halle

This London label is known for its beautiful, 1920s-inspired nightwear. This season, it has created silk trousers, kimono jackets and silk shirts with daytime in mind.

Lounge Lovers
Van the puigmas as dampear trend

Yes, the **pyjamas as daywear** trend is here to stay. These labels have taken loungewear out of the bedroom and onto our style wish list



Shirt, £125, Asceno Poppy Sexton-Wainwright and Lauren Skerritt have been designing laid-back, luxury loungewear together since they met at Newcastle University. This season they've taken their cue from 1970s Morocco and Aztec prints in vintage shades.



Canadian label The Sleep Shirt has turned creating classic nightshirts from soft Japanese cotton into an art form. This season, the label has added wintry checks to its trademark line-up of boyish stripes and muted neutrals.

Cotton s The Slee

SEE IT • WATCH IT

Get a first look at our favourite designer pieces at fashioncupboard.elleuk.com



Oversized sportswear? The dream team has it covered

Consider the second NikeLab X Sacai collection to be the gym-kit equivalent of couture. Classic Nineties sportswear gets the Sacai treatment, and is remixed into ingenious hybrids: cotton sweaters are juxtaposed with chunky knits, the cult Nike Windrunner skirt features a just-seen lace slip, and the brand's hallmark pleats billow out the back of cotton t-shirts. Guaranteed to make your heart race before you've even hit the treadmill. Available from 5 Nov at Nike.com/LAB and NIKE 1948, London EC2A 3LQ, from £80

NIKELAB

SHOP IT See ELLE's pick of new-season bags at elleuk.com/fashion





fashion-meetsstreetwear label Wood Wood has added a denim line to its repertoire. Featuring flared, straight and skinny jeans - with denim jackets, T-shirts and sweaters thrown into the mix - the range is clean, minimalist and effortlessly cool. Available from Urban Outfitters, prices from £27 to £220



Compiled by: Gillian Brett, Photography: Instagram/caradelevingne, Getty, Mehdi Lacoste. Hair and make-up: Desmond Grundy at Carol Hayes Management using Bumble and bumble and Mac Cosmetics. Manicure: Roxanne Campbell using OPI. Model: Melissa Bell at Select Model Management. For shopping details, see Address Book.

Top and bottom: Carrera watch, £1,850; Carrera Lady Diamond Bezel watch, £3,150, both TAG Heuer x Cara Delevingne





Tag Heuer ambassador Cara Delevingne has put her spirited spin on the classic Carrera collection. The special-edition series features pretty details such as a diamond-studded bezel and an aged, padded-calfskin strap with diamond-shaped chequerboard stitching. The back is embossed with a lion's head - representing Cara's star sign, Leo, and her first ever tattoo - with her signature across the reverse of the strap. Available from tagheuer.co.uk, prices from £1,700



Cara's tattoo: totally roar-some



FIRST

Chvrches frontwoman **Lauren Mayberry** isn't afraid to speak her mind. Here, she talks music and sexism with ELLE's Music Editor, Edith Bowman



he first time I heard Chyrches, I was mesmerised by Lauren Mayberry's voice: beautifully fragile, but with a determined delivery that goes succinctly with the band's driving electro beats.

I'm not the only one. In the four years since the Glasgow three-piece formed (the band also comprises Iain Cook and Martin Doherty), they've had colossal success. Their debut album The Bones of What You Believe was released in 2013 and has sold nearly a million copies. They've now achieved the hallowed accolade of breaking America too, having recently completed a sell-out tour.

But what impresses me even more than this is how the band's frontwoman Lauren, now 28, has used her platform to stand up not just for herself, but for fellow women on the music scene, today and in the future. Lauren is fearless in her fight; from appearances on Channel 4 News and editorials in The Guardian calling out misogyny, to discussing gender in the industry with an audience at Google's offices and challenging internet trolls, nothing fazes her.

Before joining the band, Laura completed a four-year law degree at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, followed by a master's in journalism in 2010. She now uses those skills and any spare time on the road to write for a website she set up in 2012 called TYCI a platform for all women to showcase their creativity.

Lauren is the type of role model we need to take notice of: a smart young woman in a maledominated industry using her voice for good. Now, with Chyrches promoting their new second album, Every Open Eye, I met up with her to talk about the important of the message and the music.

Edith Bowman: Who did you most admire when you were growing up?

Lauren Mayberry: The turning point in my teenage years was discovering Kathleen Hanna [the lead singer of feminist punk band Bikini Kill]. She is a complete individual who blazed a trail for so many girls to follow. One of the things I took away from the documentary film about her [The Punk Singer was that while she wanted to make all these changes and was a pioneer, she also showed that you don't have to be strong all the time. Sometimes we are all vulnerable. I love that she is completely herself.>

Up front: Lauren has about sexism in the music Photography: Rachael Wright, Lorenzo Dalbosco



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policed very differently. There's not a lot of sexuality in our performances, but I am bill and find that it accurately reflected the a woman, and I'm proud to be a woman. breakdown of society - not just in gender but in race, too. As much as certain progress has EB: What would you change about the been made, most festivals are full of white guys. Is that what people want to see? I don't LM: It would be really refreshing if we could believe it. I think it's the chicken-and-egg all wake up one day and read interviews or thing: until you book more diverse acts, reviews of bands like Sleater-Kinney or people aren't going to know about them, so then you're not going to have any reason Savages without reading the phrase 'all-

> to book them. Every Open Eye by Chvrches is out now

C HEAR IT For more of the best new music, go to elleuk.com/ now-trending

other musicians who **EDITH PICKS** march to the beat of their own drums



I don't want to bury that.

music industry tomorrow?

female band'. Stop making that the centre of

the story. And if you could look at a festival



2. MICACHU AKA MICA LEVI

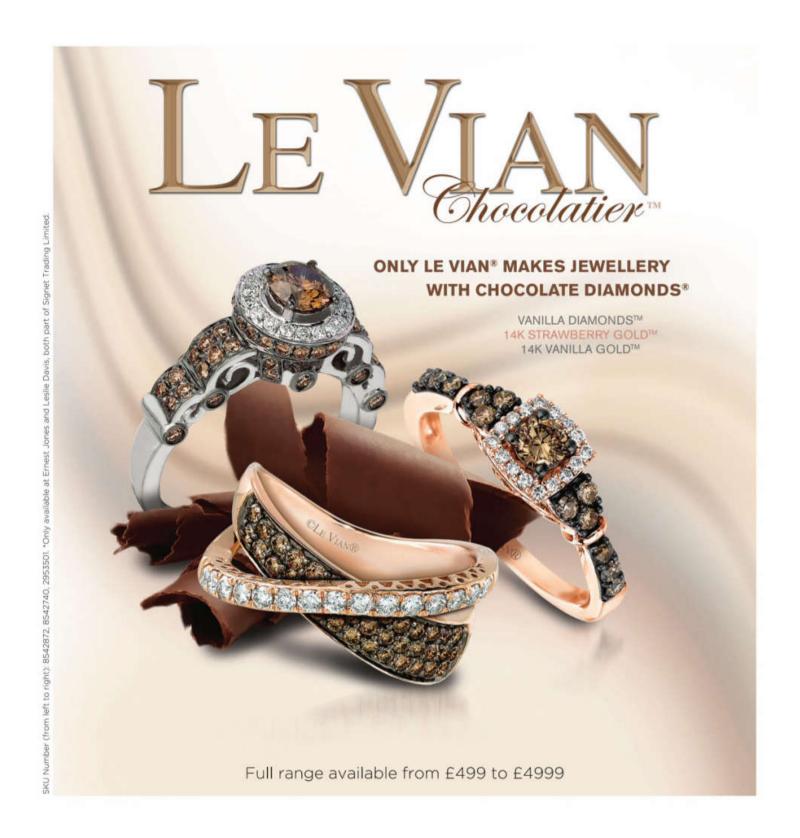
I'm in awe of this woman's talents. Not just a creator of pop music, she was responsible for the incredible score for the Scarlett Johansson film Under The Skin. I can't wait to see what she does next.



A new musician who has risen through social media and is using her space in the spotlight to be outspoken on mental health and gender issues in both her songs and interviews.



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MICHAELA COEL

The next Greta Gerwig

In a nutshell She can write, sing and act - the holv trinity. The inside track Born in East London, Michaela, 27, has had roles in Channel 4's Top Boy and the film Monsters: Dark Continent. Now she's revealing her true talents in E4's Chewing Gum, which she wrote and stars in. Coel plays Tracey Gordon, a religious, Beyoncé-obsessed 22-year-old. 'I wrote based on the life I've lived,' she says. She's also released a spoken-word album. Fixing Barbie. Next she's filming a TV show for Channel 4 with Michael Socha (This Is England 90) and Top Boy's Ashley Walters, with the working title Aliens.

Chewing Gum is now on E4

@@MIAGOTH

ROSE LESLIE

The next ------Ruth Wilson

In a nutshell Your go-to headstrong woman.

The inside track After debuting as a farm hand in Downton Abbey, Rose, 28, did a stint as Jon Snow's lover in Game Of Thrones (and was rumoured to be dating Kit Harington in real life, too). Now the Aberdeen-born actress has two new major roles: first in thriller The Last Witch Hunter (out now) with Elijah Wood; and joining Idris Elba in the latest installment of Luther (starting this month). There are also rumours Rose will replace Jenna Coleman in Doctor Who. Watch this space. Luther returns to BBC One in Dec

@ROSELESLIE



@MICHAELACOEL

SCREENSAVERS

Meet the **new genertion** of women making waves in film and TV



The next Chloë Sevigny In a nutshell A fashion/film multitasker.

The inside track This young star is so much more than just Shia LaBeouf's (possibly ex-) girlfriend. Spotted at age 15 by photographer Gemma Booth at a festival, Mia. now 23, was signed to the Storm agency and has since modelled for Prada and Miu Miu. Her breakthrough role came as P in Nymphomaniac, followed up with a part in Sky Atlantic's The Tunnel. Mia also joined Josh Brolin and Robin Wright in the film Everest, released in September, and is currently filming A Cure For Wellness, a supernatural horror film, out next autumn.

DAISY RIDLEY

The next Natalie Portman In a nutshell A girl who knows how to nail the big auditions.

The inside track You might have missed 23-year-old Daisy in MrSelfridge and she didn't even make the final cut of The Inbetweeners 2, but that's all about to change. She became an overnight sensation when she was announced as the Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force

only major female character in Awakens. Ridley is said to be playing Han Solo and Princess Leia's daughter, Jaina Solo. Megastardom awaits. Awakens is out on 17 December

AND DON'T MISS...

War And Peace, Tolstoy's Russian classic is coming to BBC One in January. Here's what you need to know: 1. The last TV adaptation was in 1972 and starred Sir Anthony Hopkins. The epic story of love, family and war ran for 20 hour-long episodes. This series will be just six hours in total - phew. 2. It's directed by Tom Harper, whose credits include Peaky Blinders (also back this month). 3. It stars Lily James (Cinderella), Paul Dano (12 Years A Slave) and Gillian Anderson. And it's set to be our 2016 style inspiration.







JULIETTE LEWIS

The iconic actress and rock star on her fear of crowds, dealing with sexism in the media and meeting the Queen

Interview Eve Barlow

n enormous police mugshot of Juliette Lewis is propped against the wall in her LA living room. 'It's become a representation of everything I am,' she says, laughing. 'I got arrested at 19 for dancing - all I was doing was dancing.' The LA-born, 42-year-old actress, famed for her roles in Cape Fear and Natural Born Killers, stars in the forthcoming Jem And The Holograms, about a girl band's quest for superstardom. It's her first major film role since August: Osage County in 2013. Her band, Juliette And The Licks, is also cranking up the machine again after six years apart. Today, she's at home writing her first film script. 'I can fill a page in 15 minutes.' OK, Juliette, let's go...

What appealed to you about Jem And The Holograms? I liked that they turned a typically male role into this female nemesis. It was an offer I couldn't refuse. I play The Man!

You run a major record label in the film. What's your take on the industry? They build these superstars out of young things with talent by fitting them into a mould, and [the artists] start losing their individuality. Today's pop stars are corporate-made entities with nice voices.

As a rock star yourself, have things improved for women in the business?

Gratuitous sexualisation is still insane. Patti Smith, Blondie, Chrissie Hynde, Tina Turner... All those women were complex individuals whose sexuality was incarnate, not this manufactured pornography. I got offered magazine covers years ago - they wanted me to be half-naked. I said no.

Do you feel like a mentor to younger actresses?

I don't see myself as a role model. But unlike some ladies I know who have carved up their face and lost their soul, I've always been me, just more insane, more fearless, more driven.

Do you read your own press? No, never. I used to. I would cry at the weirdest stuff. When you're an actress, journalists write about you in this fantastical way: 'She walked into the restaurant and sat daintily...' and I don't recognise myself. I'm not Jennifer Lopez! I thought the media was a place where I could be me. But you're

Do people still paint you as scary?

entertainment medium.

just a character in another

I love it! Because of Natural Born Killers, everyone always asks: 'What's she like? Is she crazy?' I was almost going to name my first EP Is She Crazy?.



Did it ever upset you?

There was a time when I thought, 'Maybe I should be more put together.' But as you see, I'm incredibly goofy and feminine. Just not polished. I have been in polished settings. Like I met the Queen at one of her meet and greets...

How was that?

They told me not to cuss and I thought I was gonna have Tourette's and say, 'Sh*t: I forgot to say Your Majesty. Sorry!' If you give me too many rules, the rebel in me goes bananas.

What scares you?

Oh man, love. The fear of letting someone in. I went through that recently. Also, crowds. I have a huge fear of crowds. The irony is that my band is a therapeutic exercise. I hurl myself into thousands of people.

Does religion help maintain your optimism?

Ha! Have you been sent to ask me about Scientology? Here's the thing about labels: I'm interested in the cultivation of chi, life force, soul power. I have no relationship with the pop-culture term 'Scientology'. You might as well call me a green elephant. Jem And The Holograms is out 12 February 2016

SEE IT Read more Q&As at elleuk.com/now-trending



Left: Juliette Lewis with Aubrev Peeples in Jem And The Holograms



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DESIGNER TO KNOW

1. Polyester and crepe skirt, £675.
2. Leather top, £495.
3. Velvet dress, £1,245. 4. Jersey dress, £875. 5. Silk-crepe dress, £995.
6. Embroidered crepe dress, £1,185.
All by Galvan





GET TO KNOW THE FOUR STYLISH WOMEN REINVENTING EVENINGWEAR WITH NEW LABEL GALVAN

Words Georgia Simmonds

ncomfortable, chintzy, conservative and bank-breaking - traditional eveningwear doesn't have the best reputation. But forget what you thought you knew: Galvan, a new brand with four impressive businesswomen at the helm (who can, as required, stand in as models), is refreshing the image of occasionwear.

A realisation that accessible, fashion-forward eveningwear was hard to find galvanised (see what they did there) the gang's determination to do something about it. Their slick, understated garments will work now, and keep on working. And who can argue with the label's fans: Rihanna, Julia Restoin Roitfeld, Jennifer Lawrence, Sienna Miller, Elizabeth Olsen and Gwyneth Paltrow?

'If you're going to spend £1,000 on a dress, not only do you want great quality, but you want to

wear it again. We like to think of our things as eveningwear staples,' says CEO Katherine Holmgren. 'They're on the minimal side, which means you can re-accessorise them.'

This plain-dealing ethos, coupled with a pared-down aesthetic, has

allowed Galvan to establish itself, at record speed, as the most appealing new name in formal wear. Its tailored jumpsuits, high-end silk slip dresses and separates promise endurance.

'We try to achieve a very modern, timeless look that is effortless,' says design director Anna-Christin Haas. 'Either the dress or the fabric has a little edge to it.'

These are super-luxury garments - fabrics are sourced from a specialist in France who also supplies Givenchy, Yves Saint Laurent and Chanel couture. What keeps the prices competitive? The clean lines and lack of embellishment.

The well-connected, industrysavvy team were friends before they were business partners. The design heads are Iceland-born former model Sola Harrison (31, the creative director who lives between London and LA) and Düsseldorfbased design director Anna-Christin (37, previously of Jasmine Di Milo). Taking care of the business side are New Yorker Katherine (30) and Switzerland-born Carolyn Hodler (30, sales director), both of whom have a fine-art background (Katherine at the Serpentine Gallery and Frieze, Carolyn at Christie's), and now live in London.

With SS16 celebrating the slip dress (think Kate Moss circa 1994 in Calvin Klein), Galvan is a go-to label. The construction is clever, too: 'We try to keep it comfortable; hidden corsets help, and we use stretch silks, especially as low linings,' says Anna-Christin, 'which make everything more flattering – like you have longer legs and a smaller waist.'

Conclusion: the night belongs to Galvan.

@GALVANLONDON



From left: Galvan founders Katherine Holmgren, Anna-Christin Haas, Carolyn Hodler and Sola Harrison

150

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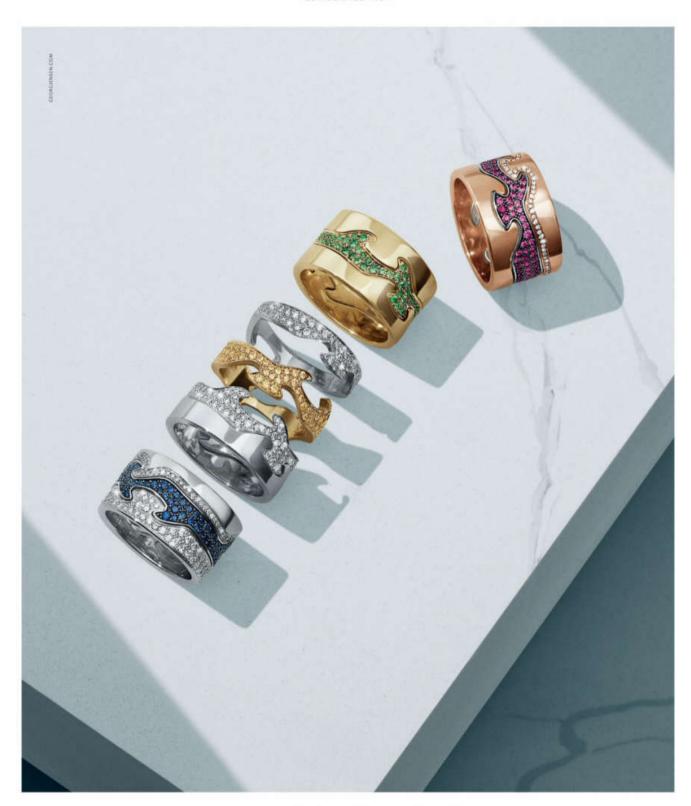
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MY LIFE IN BOOKS SHEILA HETI

The author of How Should A Person Be?, 38, shares the books that have shaped her life

The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde

I read this every few years. It's a dark fable about how our love of another person's beauty is as corrupting as the attachment to our own. Dorian Gray is a gorgeous young man who sells his soul to stay young forever - his sins marring not his own face, but that of his increasingly vile portrait.

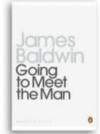


An Everlasting Meal by Tamar Adler

As someone who ate a peanut-butter sandwich for lunch every day of my childhood, it took discovering this book (and not the many other cookbooks I've purchased) to learn how to cook, and to understand and love food. In addition to Adler's inventive prose, I'm fascinated by her almost mystical idea that one should be thinking not of separate meals, but of how we're actually eating one meal, across a lifetime.

Going to Meet the Man by James Baldwin

With these eight short stories, Baldwin takes us into the world and psyche of variously disturbed, sad and tragic men and women in mid-20th century America. His characters contend with poverty, love, drugs and racism. One story about a white boy being taught to love a lynching will chill you forever. Baldwin's heart and sensitivity are unbearably acute.



I Ching

This ancient Chinese book of divination orders the world into 64 'hexagrams' or phases. Like the war generals who first used this book, I consult it to help me take the best course of action and temper my destructive impulses. Get the Bollingen edition to learn how to use it. Carl Jung was obsessed. So was Confucius. So am I.



I-CHING

Lispector is regarded as the finest Brazilian writer of the 20th century. Here she narrates the story of a poor woman who has the most common of feminine aspirations - beauty and being loved. But Lispector is unsparing in her contempt for the idea that we are all destined for happiness, and looks darkly upon those who peddle these lies.



FIRST

Two Serious Ladies by Jane Bowles

This is one of my favourite novels. Jane Bowles was a hilarious and original writer, her mind unparalleled in its complexity and charm. Born in New York, she lived much of her life in Tangier with her husband, the writer Paul Bowles (yet both of them were gay). She died at 56 and only wrote one novel, which features a whole cast of eccentric women.



Elective Affinities by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

When Goethe published this book in 1809, chemistry was as popular as the internet is today. Goethe places a married couple on an estate in Germany with a single man and a single woman, and observes the play of attraction among all four. Will passions rearrange alliances, the way chemicals rearrange the world on a molecular level? All this is behind a very entertaining book about marriage and adultery.





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THREE NEW ILLUSTRATED BOOKS FOR GROWN-UPS



FOR CURLING UP WITH
Ghostly illustrated by Audrey
Niffenegger (Vintage Classics)
Artist and The Time Traveler's
Wife author Niffenegger
curates a collection of modern
and classic ghost stories.



FOR A HIT OF NOSTALGIA

The Snow Queen by Hans Christian Andersen, illustrated by Sanna Annukka (Hutchinson) Cleverly mixes traditional and modern imagery with this classic fairy tale.



Becoming Unbecoming by Una (Myriad Editions) This debut graphic novel explores gender violence, blame, shame and social responsibility.



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Photography **Greg Holland**Words **Gillian Brett**

Kathryn Ferguson, 33, directs films with a feminist take on fashion. We look in her closet

athryn is part of a new wave of female film directors challenging gender stereotypes. She had her lightbulb moment working on a fashion film six years ago: 'With moving images, you need more than a pretty face and a beautiful set. Film gives you the opportunity to create a truer representation of your subject,' she explains in her Northern Irish lilt. 'Passive depictions of women are something I really push against in my work - I want to show who she is and what she has to say.'

Kathryn has created music videos making a feature of her 'female gaze' for formidable artists

such as Sinéad O'Connor, Lady Gaga and Neneh Cherry, and short films for Chloé and Nike. As the Resident Film Director for Selfridges, she made a four-part film series challenging modern beauty ideals, and uses fashion as a tool to redress sexism and support the new wave of feminism. 'We're looking at age, ethnic diversity, size and sexuality in a much more fluid way. Mindless, thoughtless advertising and content is over,' she says.

When it comes to her own dress code, Kathryn likes to present a feminine but strong image of herself to the world. 'Floating about in my long dresses and palazzo pants, I'm probably not the most practically dressed director in the world. My secret weapon is a long black tailored coat that I wear when I want to look and feel like I've got it

together. I bought it on sale at Jaeger a year ago.' A believer in the psycholog

A believer in the psychology of dressing, she recoils at the prospect of wearing trainers and a tracksuit on set. 'I do wear flats or flatforms so I can run around, but I'll buy nice ones in Tod's or & Other Stories. I shop in Cos a lot, too. My most prized possession is a cream Chloé coat. It was a career clap-on-the-back purchase and is so beautiful I hardly ever wear it, but it symbolises a lot to me.'

Lecturing part-time on fashion film at London College of Fashion, Kathryn encourages her students to follow suit and level the gender gap in the industry. 'We need more female directors to communicate to women in a progressive voice that we can identify with. I'm so tired of that clichéd woman lolling about in a cornfield, I want to know what's going on in her head and watch her do something – play the drums, sing, run.'
Or better yet, direct.





KATHRYN'S FILMS

Stills from Kathryn's works, from top: H/Horses for Chloé; Change Is a Beautiful Thing for Selfridges; Devonté Hynes & Neneh Cherry's He, She, Me video



Additional images: Kathryn Ferguson.

MONDAY

'I like to wear bright colours when I work from home - they keep the cabin fever at bay.'



TUESDAY

'My tops are always very neat and fitted - polonecks make up most of my wardrobe.'



Viscose top, f92, Pinko. Silk-mix trousers, f570, Dsquared2. Jaeger coat, Kathryn's own



2008 - present Freelance Director 2014 - present Resident Film Director, Selfridges

2012 - present Exhibition Curator and Consultant, British Fashion Council

2011 - present Film Programmer, British Council

2010 - present Research Fellow and Lecturer, Central Saint Martins

EDUCATION

2011 -Visual Communication MA, Royal College of Art

2005 - Fashion Communication and Promotion BA, Central Saint Martins



WEDNESDAY

'Layering is my secret weapon for office-to-event dressing.'

FRIDAY

ndals, £160,

ne von

urstenberg.

Kathryn's own

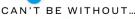
'I have a uniform of black jumpsuits for lecturing days at Central Saint Martins.'

Silk-crepe coat, £450, Jaeger. Wool dress, £115, Cos. Leather bag, £79, & Other Stories. Sunglasses, tights and & Other Stories shoes, all

Kathryn's own

THURSDAY

For me, a smart coat rescues any outfit for an impromptu important meeting. I don't do well in heels, you see.'







'My cafetiere, lots of plants and bright prints (this one is by Saskia Pomeroy) in my studio.'



THE PARISIANS' LIFESTYLE
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'Mix brights with metallics to add a modern edge to colour blocking.'



FROM THE

ELLE FASHION CUPBOARD

THE TREND IS WINTER WORKWEAR

From block colour to sharp tailoring, luxe knits and chic footwear, these are smart daytime looks with serious style

'Shirts needn't be boring. This statement shape, paired with my favourite denim, make it feel "me":



'White shirts are a workwear staple for me, but I like to mix them with bright colours. A highshine Sixtiesstyle boot gives a polished finish.'



'Polonecks are my winter staple. The suit is smart for work, while trainers add a cool, casual vibe.

DEPUTY EDITOR

Wool blazer, £370, and







'Invest in a kilt skirt for a feminine workwear silhouette.



ROSIE WILLIAMS FREELANCE FASHION ASSISTANT

Cashmere jumper, £195, Eric Bompard. Cottonmix top (underneath), £17, Intimissimi. Cotton skirt, £195, DKNY. Charlotte Olympia heels and jewellery, Rosie's own

'Asymmetric shapes create clean lines, which are a perfect match for colour

blocking.







STYLE IT From the Editor-in-Chief to the interns, find out what Team ELLE wears to the office every week at elleuk.com/street-style

165



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'This is a treasure. It's such an eye-catching piece and it goes with everything.'



CLOSET confidential

FANNY MOIZANT

A tightly-edited wardrobe is the key to style success, says Fanny Moizant, 38. The co-founder of fashion resale site Vestiaire Collective shares her spoils

Words Gillian Brett Photography Silvia Olsen



PHOTOGRAPHY

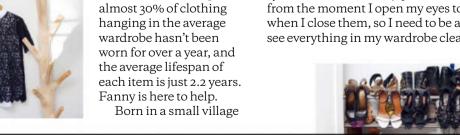
'I love Damon Heath's fashion photographs - they have a nostalgic feel to them. I have a few in my home.'

anny Moizant has possibly one of the smallest wardrobes in west London - surprising for a woman who works in the fashion industry's equivalent of a sweet shop. As the co-founder and communications director of French luxury pre-owned fashion marketplace Vestiaire Collective, her tightly edited rails of everyday basics conjure both bewilderment and suspicion. Picture your own closet for a moment - not many of us can deny

a certain degree of hoarding. In fact, a recent survey exposed the white elephant in all our bedrooms, revealing almost 30% of clothing hanging in the average wardrobe hasn't been worn for over a year, and the average lifespan of each item is just 2.2 years.

just outside Montpellier, and now heading up the UK office and living in London (with her husband Michael, who works in finance, and daughters Louise, nine, and Jeanne, eight), Fanny has made it her business to encourage women to sell their beloved but mothcourting wares on to a new home. With little time to faff about in the morning, she leads by example, operating a ruthless 'one in, one out' system. 'I don't have a 9-5. I'm working from the moment I open my eyes to when I close them, so I need to be able to see everything in my wardrobe clearly











TREASURED MEMENTOS

Even her sideboard is perfectly curated.



Hersan), she launched the site in Paris in October 2009. Now counting three million members across 40 countries, Fanny's pipe dream generated revenue of more than £33 million last year.

Social media and the proliferation of street-style photography have undoubtedly changed how we consume fashion, and how we shop today. Fanny says, 'I'm addicted to my phone, I check Instagram on the hour and screenshot outfits I love. I add them to an album of things I've photographed from magazines and then hunt them down online. I don't have time to shop, so I do everything through this,' she says, presenting her iPhone 6 with the adoration usually bestowed upon a newborn – or a new pair of Giuseppe Zanottis, as the case may be.

'It's all about the piece and how you style it, as opposed to the trend,' asserts Fanny, who is dressed casually in a statement McQ sweater, Topshop jeans and a Repossi Berbère ring. 'There is nothing in my wardrobe that I regret selling. Our first-ever sale on Vestiaire was a Gucci bag of mine that went for £55. Since then, I've sold 139 pieces, and I have 27 on sale right now,' she says, swiping through the app to pull up a Carven top, a Sportmax sweater, an A.P.C. shirt (unworn), a rare Pièce d'Anarchive dress, a Maje poncho and an Edie Parker clutch.

'I don't have an emotional attachment to clothing. I guess the only thing I could never part with is my portable phone charger.'



SEE IT Be inspired by real women at elleuk.com/street-style

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VINTAGE VALENTINO DRESS

'This was for a gold and chocolate-themed wedding. It's one dress I'm going to save for my little girls.'



and spot the pieces I want to wear,' she explains as she slides open a mirrored door and pulls out a white Equipment shirt for scrutiny. 'If I haven't worn something for a few months, I take it out, bring it to the office and pouf! It's gone,' she says, patting her back pocket.

in a Gap shirt,

Joseph leather

trousers, Acne boots and

Hermès cuff

Fanny was working in sales for a home decorating company and eagerly seeking a new venture when she picked up a feature in French ELLE about 'Les Recessionistas', a group of fashion bloggers who were putting their most popular items up for resale. A light-bulb moment followed, giving her a zeitgeist-friendly idea.

After rounding up two business partners (Sébastien Fabre and Sophie



DEETZ SWEATER

'My favourite sweater. It's the perfect cut, and an amazing fabric with a fun twist. I'm also a huge fan of Amy and Lauren, the talented sisters who founded Deetz.'

2. Paris: Le Stresa (lestresa.com) 'A temple of good Italian cuisine.' 3. New York: Wythe Hotel (wythehotel.com) 'The upstairs bar has the best view of Manhattan ever.'

ELLEUK.COM 169



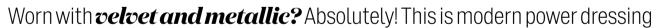
Far left: Cotton jacket, £70, and matching trousers, £50, both Topshop. Silk blouse, £249, Sandro. Wool-mix top (worn underneath), £110, L.K.Bennett. Leather shoes, £395, Robert Clergerie. Gold earrings, £395, Links of London Left: Wool blazer, £339, By Malene Birger. Silk blouse, £2,155, Ralph Lauren. Leather bag, £505, Emporio Armani Below: Velvet jacket, £569, Equipment. Cotton shirt, £620, Vivienne Westwood Unisex. Polyester skirt, £65, Topshop, Earrings, £5, Rare. Metal ring, £69, By Malene Birger











Right: Leather shoes, £490, Bottega Veneta Far right: Wool-mix blazer, £179, Jack Wills. Cotton shirt, £79.96, Barbour. Polyester skirt, £55, Oasis. Metal earrings, £8.50 for set of six, Freedom at Topshop









Right: Silk dress, £469, Marc Cain. Leather shirt, £175, The Kooples. Leather shoes, £99, Finery. Cotton socks, £7, Pringle. Leather watch, £290, Folli Follie Far right: Gold earrings, £2,200, Boucheron. Ring, £69, By Malene Birger. Leather bag, £225, Kurt Geiger. Dress and shirt, as before **Below:** Wool blazer, £339, By Malene Birger. Silk-mix top, £250, Mother of Pearl. Silk blouse (worn underneath), £215, Ralph Lauren. Silk-mix trousers, £110, French Connection. Shoes and bag, both as before





EFASHIONCUPBOARD









Styling: Donna Wallace. Photography: Robert Harper. Additional, photography: Anthea Simms. Hair and make-up: Carolyn Gallyer at CLM Hair and Make Up using Chanel Christmas 2015, Chanel Body Excellence and Unite Hair. Manicure: Roxanne Campbell using Dolce & Gabbana. Model: Bo Jong at Next Models. For shopping details, see Address Book.



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STRE

See it > buy it > wear it



JO GREASLEY, 26. STYLIST AT ASOS

SHOP MY LOOK

Faux-fur coat, £100, and denim jeans, £38, both Asos. Wool-mix jumper, £375, McQ. Leather trainers, £170, Carvela. Leather bag, £150, Rebecca Minkoff. The Great Frogrings, Jo's own >



@@JO_GREASLEY

p185 Anthea Simms, Georgia Devey Smith at Anthea Simms. Map: Russell Bell.

Styling: Donna Wallace. Main photography: Greg Holland. Additional photography:

Street Style... King's Cross, London Fashion diversity rules for the women of N1 Micro Trend... Chunky knits Woolly and warm, the winter staple gets super-sized



ELLE STYLES AISHLING McNEILL, 25, VIP EXECUTIVE AT IPR LONDON



I like to dress from the shoes up. Heels often call for a jeans and tee combo. Trainers, a skirt and jumper'

SHOP MY LOOK

Wool-mix coat, £410, Bimba Y Lola. Polyester-mix jumper, £20, and denim jeans, £40, both Monki. Rayon top (worn underneath), £62, Ganni. Leather boots, £79, Topshop. Leather bag, £275, Kate Moss for Longchamp. Gold necklace, £165, Effra



ELLE STYLES KYLEY DODD, 27, WOMENSWEAR PRESS OFFICER AT WHISTLES

'The great thing about dressing for winter is how adventurous you can be with layering'



SHOP MY LOOK

Faux-fur gilet, £195, navy mohair jumper, £95, yellowwool-mix jumper (worn underneath), £95, and wool-mix culottes, £130, all Whistles. Felt trainers, £282, Claudie Pierlot. Ring and socks, both Kyley's own





Apriy. areginotana.

ELLE STYLES JULIA NGUYEN, 23, SALES EXECUTIVE AT LINDA FARROW



'The bomber is one of my favourite pieces to take into winter'

SHOP MY LOOK

Wool-mixjacket, £178, Ganni. Merino-wool top, £65, Hobbs. Denimjeans, £110, Whistles. Leather shoes, £370, Stuart Weitzman. Gold-plated brass earrings, £140, and gold ring, £108, both Arme de L'Amour. Cashmere-mixscarf, £280, Emma J Shipley. Bag, Julia's own



■@LDN_J92





'Trainers are an essential for city living. I love this glittery pair as they're comfortable and girlie'



@@LILPAPSTER

SHOP MY LOOK

Wool coat, £260, Rebecca Minkoff. Wool jumper, £175, Wood Wood. Leather skirt, £737, Tibi. Leather-mix trainers, £185, Sandro. Enamel and metal earrings, £105, Bimba Y Lola>



ASPINAL





ELLE STYLES JOY OGEAH, 24, FREELANCE FASHION WRITER

SHOP MY LOOK

Wool-mix coat, £85, Asos. Polyestermix jumper, £29.99, H&M. PVC dress (just seen), £22.99, New Look. Leather shoes, £520, Robert Clergerie. Leather bag, £209, Maje. Cotton socks, £11, Falke



■@ITSMEEEEJOY

'A clean silhouette and fun accessories give my schoolgirl vibe a modern feel. I also really like patterns'

MAP IT • DO IT
See full London listings
at elleuk.com/travel

KICK BACK IN KING'S CROSS

Home to London's most prestigious fashion course, the area is having a moment with a slew of new restaurants and shops

INSIDER'S GUIDE TO KING'S CROSS, LONDON

Meet... for mighty fine coffee at Caravan 2
(caravankingscross.co.uk) Shop... gifts and homeware from independent designers at Drink, Shop & Do 3
(drinkshopdo.com) Eat... seasonal British dishes at Plum+Spilt Milk 0 (plumandspiltmilk.com) Drink... one (or more) of over 40 wines at the newly opened Drake & Morgan at King's Cross 9 (drakeandmorgan.

co.uk) *Move...* your body into myriad poses at **Yoga Haven** 3 (yogahaven.co.uk)

Somers Town

Somers Town

St Pancras Station

British Library

Bloomsbury

Brunswick Centre

Charles Dicken's
Museum

The British

The British

Museum

The British

The

ELLEUK.COM

Styling: Donna Wallace. Photography: Greg Holland. Map: Russell Bell. For shopping details, see Address Book

If there's one thing that's changing the face of beauty forever it's technology. Here's how...



eauty today knows no boundaries. In this digital age the buzz surrounding beauty trends is greater than ever, with social media and beauty blogs acting as a platform where real-world advice and insight can be sought and shared.

Championing this no-boundaries approach to beauty is the #BeautyHeroes campaign, for which Philips and ELLE hand-picked six beauty-savvy women from the UK, China, Korea, Russia, Germany and France. Here, Essex-born Paula Goldstein Di Principe, is on a mission to seek out and share the best beauty trends from around the globe.

Beauty on the go

'We've come a long way,' says Paula with a laugh, since the days when a so-called traditional UK beauty routine was 'a bit of Pears soap'. In 2015, we understand the value of a thorough skincare regime and place more importance on grooming, thanks in part to our international sisters. Asia has always been at the forefront of

science in skincare: 'My friends from South Korea bring back all these amazing face masks,' notes Paula. And while New York may have long championed the mani-pedi ('In NYC they're as compulsory as brushing your teeth!'), Paula believes the UK to be ahead of the curve when it comes to natural skincare.

An international globetrotter by passion and profession, Paula knows her stuff. The product she wouldn't be without? The Philips Lumea. Since discovering it two months ago, she's been amazed at how easy and convenient it is to achieve long-term hair removal at home. Regular bi-weekly sessions means she never has to be caught out with unwanted underarm or leg hair. For Paula, it's the future of beauty, and she's letting everyone know.

Smarter Beauty

Offering long-term control over facial and body hair, the Philips Lumea uses leading-edge technology to bring salon-professional results to the privacy of your home. Use it with the new Lumea mobile app to track treatments and remind you when they're due. The Philips VisaPure is a powerful yet gentle electronic brush that cleans skin up to 10 times more effectively than hand cleansing*, with a stimulating brushhead that leaves skin looking more radiant and glowing. With Philips, beauty has never been so smart or so easy.



From left to right:

Capucine Piot (France), Jessica

Korea), Queenie Chan (China),

Victoria Sekrier (Russia) and Paula Goldstein Di Principe (UK)

Weiß (Germany), Liah Yoo (South

WIN A BEAUTY BOX!

At beautyheroes.com you won't just find all the latest news and beauty advice from our six international beauty collaborators. Every month, ELLE and Philips are giving away a brand-new beauty box, worth at least £400. Each one is packed with one of the collaborator's personal beauty favourites. including a selection of Philips' must-have beauty tools. All you need to do is sign up to receive the #BeautyHeroes newsletter for your chance to win. Do it today at beautyheroes.com



WATCH IT See Paula talk about global beauty trends and more at beautyheroes.com

Chunky knits

The mercury may be dropping, but these jumpers are popping





Wool, £129, Marks& Spencer Best Of British



ELLE tip: The extra-wide funnel-neck hair tuck is the best (and warmest) way to

















ELLE tip: An abstract print is the perfect way to add accents of colour to your winter wardrobe. Mohair and wool-mix, £495, Hunter







ELLE tip: For extra slouch appeal, wear your sleeves extra long and pair with a clutch to keep the overall look casual but smart.



SHOP TILL YOU...

Christmas comes early at **Seven Dials** and **St Martin's Couryard**'s exclusive shopping event

ondon is internationally
- and rightly - known for
the richness of its street
and shopping life. Even
so, one quarter stands
out: Seven Dials and St
Martin's Courtyard. This
vibrant area isn't just home to
some of the capital's finest
retailers, it positively buzzes
with brilliant bars, restaurants
and cafes. And for one very
special evening, it will offer
something more again.

On 3 December from 5-9pm the 'seven streets' will close to traffic to host an exclusive Christmas shopping event. Sign up now for your exclusive access ticket and you can look forward to 20% off across 100 of the area's leading shops, beauty brands, bars and restaurants. And that's not all. Lucky 'golden ticket' holders can pick up a gift or luxury goodie bag from the Christmas teepee. There will also be a Christmas wreath-making workshop, a street food hub and a trend talk ELLE fashion team, Harriet







Exclusively at Seven Dials and St Martin's Courtyard, 3 December, from 5-9pm

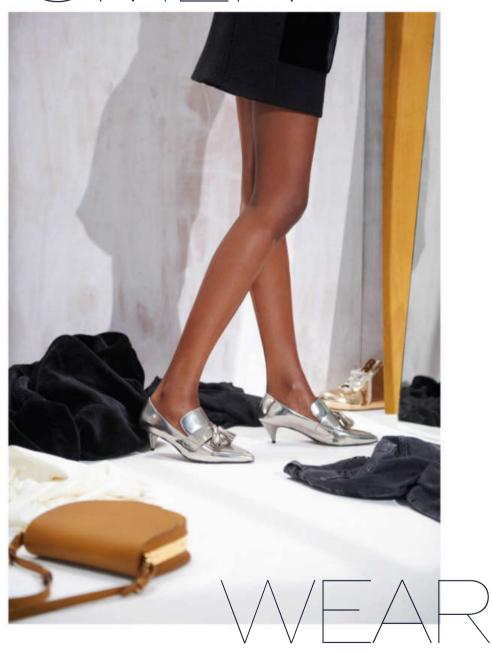
SIGN UP NOW! Register for discounts, giveaways and entry to the draw at sevendials.co.uk and stmartinscourtvard.co.uk







GETTING DRESSED SPECIAL



(AND WHY)

Read about the **59% of you with 'floordrobes',** the woman who spends **thousands** on handbags, the Editor-in-Chief who **can't wear heels** and the one and only **Alexa Chung**

WITH HER NEW FASHION APP VILLOID, ALEXA CHUNG IS

TURNING HER STYLE INSTINCT INTO A BIG BUSINESS,

OFFERING COOL OUTFIT IDEAS TO INSPIRE YOU AT THE TOUCH OF

A BUTTON. HERE, FOR HER FOURTH ELLE COVER, WE ASKED ALEXA'S

MOST FASHIONABLE FRIENDS TO DRESS HER, AS SHE TALKS TECH,

CONFIDENCE AND FINDING HER OWN VERSIONS OF SEXY

Words Hannah Swerling Photography Matt Irwin Fashion Anne-Marie Curtis

IMAGINE YOUGH PRIGHT EVERY that whenever you ste door, you were the reversion of yourself. To the resion of yourself. To the residue of the resion of yourself. To the residue of the resion of yourself. To the resion of yourself.

that whenever you stepped out the door, you were the most stylish version of yourself. That wearing your own clothes was always a joy, and you never had to cry, 'But I've got nothing to wear!' before

slamming your wardrobe door and kicking over a washing basket full of Breton tops and not-quite-right high-waisted jeans. Imagine, for a moment, you were Alexa Chung – possibly one of the best-dressed women in the world right now. You might never, ever look as good in a pair of dungarees as her (she's a model; give yourself a break), but now her expert eye and fashion instinct, along with those of her stylish friends such as Pixie Geldof and Tennessee Thomas, are at your fingertips, thanks to her game-changing new business venture, Villoid.

'I didn't want to lose sight of the fact that the way I put outfits together is still more high street than high-end on a daily basis,' she says of the concept for





Alexa styled by PIXIE GELDOF

'My Alexa is basically a Seventies groupie, like Kate Hudson's character in Almost Famous. I'd pop her in a crochet top, add some big knickers and a suede sheepskin coat, and call it a day.'



This page: Sheepskin coat, Chloé. Silk bra, Eres. Denim jeans, Sonia Rykiel Opposite: Embellished denim jacket and cotton top, both Sonia Rykiel. Patent-leather sandals, Charlotte Olympia. Nylon tights, Calzedonia. Gold earrings, worn throughout, Alexa's own





'Alexa, for me, has an early Fifties power vibe. I've taken Lauren Bacall in a suit and crossed her with Reese Witherspoon's character Jennifer in Pleasantville.'

This page: Wool jacket and matching trousers, both Bella Freud. Silk shirt, Chloé. Suede sandals, Charlotte Olympia Opposite: Wool cardigan, Alexander Lewis. Silk bra, Eres. Silk skirt, MaxMara. Ponyskin shoes, Gianvito Rossi. Rose-gold and pearl ring, Delfina Delettrez

the app. 'I get invited to events and I may borrow a dress, but if I'm getting something for myself it might be from Zara, mixed with something from Liberty. I still feel uncomfortable spending vast amounts of money on clothes. So Villoid had to reflect that.'

Alexa's fashion pulling power goes well beyond street-style snaps and Facebook likes. She won British Style Icon for three years running at the British Fashion Awards, bagged five ELLE Style Awards, and tops pretty much every Best Dressed list out there. Her eponymous Mulberry bag remains one of its all-time bestsellers, while she single-handedly helped to jump-start Marks & Spencer's first profit rise in four years in May of this year (prompting its first-ever online waiting list) when she wore *that* mid-length brown suede skirt. Of course, the two collections she designed for AG Jeans sold out quicker than Glastonbury tickets.

The 31-year-old has influence and clout within the fashion industry coupled with consumer appeal, shaping countless fashion moments in a way only legends such as Kate Moss have done before her. As one of her favourite designers Erdem says, 'An intelligent beauty always marches to the beat of her own drum.' Alexa has a huge fanbase on social media (nearly two million on Instagram and 1.5 million on Twitter), so she speaks to an awful lot of us every day. And she speaks with personality to boot, making her a thoroughly modern kind of style icon.

When I sit down with Alexa in the sumptuous foyer in Claridge's in London, she's exhausted from a busy few days of long-haul travel, shows and parties. Of course, even the sleep deprivation does nothing to dim a luminous face that is even more beautiful in real life (believe the hype). Alexa is as chatty and animated as I expected, but I'm also impressed to find that she's taking her new role of businesswoman-cum-tech entrepreneur seriously.

Villoid is a virtual dressing-up app on your phone where you can create Pinterest-like moodboards using products ranging from Asos to Acne and Miu Miu. You can share your style, follow friends and – here's the clever bit – every item can be clicked on and purchased. 'I want Villoid to be fashion insiders sharing in an allencompassing way,' she tells me. 'I want to be an authority on it without being condescending. More like, "If you need help, here we are." Fashion's a huge part of my life, but I don't necessarily feel comfortable always talking about clothes on my personal social media. I wanted a purer place for the fashion stuff to live.'

Though '100% interested' in learning the business side of things, Alexa admits she doesn't ask for algorithm breakdowns, 'I'm not Koding With Karlie yet,' she says. 'But I will ask, "Can we make it faster to get

to this page or how can we make this function easier?" What she has brought to the project is her exacting eye and a flair for writing and design - both of which have already been showcased in her 2013 book, *It*.

'I'm all over the copy and design, and that's how we set the tone. That's my particular job, so I feel responsible. I work closely with Fifi [Brown], one of my oldest friends. She has always served me and my brain – if I was doing something embarrassing or not genuine, she would be the first to call bullsh*t. Not necessarily vocally, but I always hold her in my mind as that barometer. When I used to work in television, a tip was rather than looking down the barrel of the camera and imagine people watching, which is terrifying, imagine your most discerning friend observing you and imagine you're just talking to them. And I've always done that. So I thought, "If I get Fifi involved, then tonally it's going to be correct."

It all sounds like a lot of fun, going to work with your best mate and getting to play tech entrepreneur. However, the job isn't without its pressures. 'When it comes to the creative, I want to be in control. You saw me on the shoot. If I don't like it, I can't do it. It would be different if there were more people fronting the project, but if something fails and you're the face of it in whatever capacity, you're blamed. I don't want to mess up.'

Earlier in the week, I watched Alexa posing for the camera on her cover shoot and was genuinely awestruck by the way she took control. It's a funny kind of talent. Goofing and messing around one minute, poised and focused the next, her modelling instincts are sharp as ever. She was in constant conversation with photographer Matt Irwin and ELLE Fashion Director Anne-Marie Curtis, questioning the right look for the next shot ('that dress feels like the old me') or suggesting different angles to show off the clothes.

When it comes to fashion, the same rules apply. Alexa

dresses herself (no stylist) and never panders to expectation. At Fashion Week, she's pictured in a number of long, high-necked, long-sleeved peasant dresses. Any lesser mortal would struggle to pull it off, but she kills it every time. 'I feel uncomfortable in anything tight or body-con,' she says. 'Anything sexy, I don't feel myself in. I don't know what the psychology behind that is. Maybe I'm constantly fighting for people to listen to what I have to say, so it seems undermining to look too girlie or frivolous. I think that's it. I still have my version of sexy. I've always dated dudes who think how I look is sexy anyway. A roll-neck and some flat shoes is about as good as it gets.'

As celebrated as her style is (especially on social media: Instagram posts can get up to 40,000 likes), where there's positivity,

HOW ALEXA GETS DRESSED

'Standing in front of your wardrobe thinking, "I've got nothing to wear" – that never goes away. It's a mood thing.'

'My wardrobe is a floordrobe. I can't take it any more. I'm terrible at throwing things away. I don't wear about 70% of my clothes. My flatmate's arranged for a professional organiser to come round and take care of my life.'

'I'm terrible at looking in the mirror. I get out of the shower and put moisturiser on and often don't wear any make-up. I think that comes from my mum. She's not vain in the least. She always looks very cool, even if she doesn't think she does.'



there's always a troll lurking. 'It depends what I'm up to. Who you're dating seems to be the quickest way to p*ss people off. Sometimes they'll troll me for being too thin. Less so now.' When I ask her why, the lesser-seen vulnerable Alexa answers. 'I probably look a bit healthier. I'm definitely happier. I'm just not heartbroken any more, which went on for about 25 decades.' She's referring to the painful split from her boyfriend of four years, Arctic Monkeys frontman Alex Turner, in 2011. Four years later and Alexa is reportedly in a relationship with actor Alexander Skarsgård. I ask her if she's in love, to which she laughs, embarrassed, head in hands, before playfully dismissing the question.

We move on to the far more serious subject of selfies. 'I nearly posted a selfie yesterday from bed and I was thinking, "What's wrong with me? I'm an adult and I'm sitting here in bed waving at a camera, trying to get the right angle. Why don't I just call them and say hi?" The 'time to grow up' theme recurs throughout our conversation. For much of her late twenties, Alexa felt like she was occupying tricky territory. She was no longer a mouthy TV presenter, but didn't feel old enough to have any sense of authority in what she was doing. Now, on the cusp of 32, she's starting to feel more certain about her place in the industry and how she conducts herself. 'I think it's just a part of growing up, and being more comfortable and more confident in the idea that your opinion might be valid.'

In her words, when she started out in the industry, it was a case of 'fake it till you make it'. That and a whole lot of determination. Alexa grew up in Hampshire, which she's previously referred to as 'the most middle-class [background] you could imagine'. She left school with three A-levels and an offer to study English at King's College London, but was too busy modelling by then to take it up. 'I wouldn't be told what to do,' Alexa says. 'I asked my mum recently, "When I just decided to skip university and be a model, what did you say?" and she was like, "Have you tried arguing with you before? You put forward a very good case."

As much as Alexa likes to dismiss any concept of a master plan, her staying power in a notoriously fickle industry and ability to glide from project to project with apparent ease have to be more than fluke. There are many beautiful, stylish British models out there, but she exists in her own category by virtue of, well, something. 'I think I have good instincts. With each venture it's been like swinging from

rope to rope, and obviously there are always other ones to grab, but it's about knowing yourself and what you're interested in.'

Back on the shoot, we asked Alexa to livestream to ELLE's followers on Periscope, encouraging them to choose which shoes to wear with her Mod look, styled by her friend Tennessee Thomas (on page 197). She grabs the phone and sweeps around the studio, talking to the camera like an old friend. It looks so effortless, but seeing it In Real Life, it's quite extraordinary. 'I've grown more confident from knowing that really, nothing bad can happen. All social interactions with strangers are slightly awkward, but there's no real downside other than feeling self-conscious. Luckily, most people are really nice. If you're open and friendly, they're going to be like that back. Everyone worries people won't remember them or aren't interested in what they say. Humans are pretty similar.'

Humans are pretty similar, but there are humans and then there's a red carpet with actual Beyoncé. How on earth do you walk into that room? 'After my first Met Ball in 2010, I've never been scared again. You have to go alone, you're dressed up in some concoction, you walk up this massive staircase at the top of which there's a load of the most intimidating people you've ever seen - it's always some insanely famous actor and you're like [dons goofy face and voice], "Hoy! I'm Alexa!" It's fun once you're there, but the prospect of it is terrifying. You couldn't feel worse, but it's also great, and after that nothing daunts you. Sometimes it's scarier just going home for Christmas and having to answer what you do for a living to your distant cousin.' The whole self-effacing shtick does seem like a clever way of navigating the often spiky worlds of fashion and celebrity, so I'm starting to understand why you'd rely on a certain mix of sarcasm and bravado to find your way through.

When we touch on the subject of future plans, though, there seems to be some conflict tugging away at the easybreeziness of it all. 'I wouldn't mind figuring out where to be based properly because I'm flip-flopping around between London and New York,' she admits. 'The diary dates go in and then I'm just chasing those obligations. That could continue forever, which is a worry. I just turned down something I really wanted to do because I was being practical about time. But I do like the balance at the moment. I have more free time and travel less. I want to have a boyfriend and I want to have a home - to do all those things.' How about a family?' I'm still waiting for that to kick in. I'm not thinking babies. I mean, they look great! I'm open to it and I would like a family one day, but I'm not desperate to get moving on that front. Or I could - I don't know! I've heard mixed reviews. It's also about finding someone you want to have a baby with. That's what I've heard.'

At one point in our conversation, Alexa tells me that at school she worked really hard - always doing her coursework and revision early, and then pretending she

hadn't the next day to her mates at school. I think some of that bravado is still in operation now. Serendipity aside, any successful career requires hard work, clever decision-making and a little bit of risk-taking. To use the Met Ball analogy, there'll always be some massive staircase with a Beyoncé waiting at the top. If you want to conquer it, you need to think like Alexa and just have a go. It usually works out in the end.

Villoid is available at the App Store for free



198 Matt Irwin



YOUR WARDROBE

WE ASKED YOU TO TELL US ABOUT YOUR
RELATIONSHIP WITH CLOTHES—THE RESULTS
MAY SURPRISE YOU. PLUS, FOUR ELLE VOICES
REVEAL THEIR DEFINING STYLE MOMENTS

Photography David Abrahams

ritish shoppers spend almost £55 billion a year on the high street and, as an industry, it is worth £26 billion to the UK economy. There's no denying fashion affects us all. Unless you're living on a nudist colony, we all begin every day of our lives deciding what to wear. And that decision is loaded with a million little questions about who you are, how you feel and what you want to say about yourself to the world. Which is why we wanted to get to the bottom of what makes you tick. We asked you to tell us about how you get dressed every day, from shopping and styling to knickers and floordrobes. The results are illuminating and sometimes surprising, but most of all, they reveal just how emotionally invested you are in the clothes you wear (and that it might be time to clear out your sock drawer).

67%
OF YOU SAY YOU
DRESS FOR
YOURSELF
RATHER THAN YOUR
PARTNER IN YOUR
DAY-TO-DAY LIFE

43%
OF YOU HAVE
CRIED BECAUSE
YOU COULDN'T
FIND ANYTHING
TOWEAR

Leather jacket,
Alexander McQueen.
Cotton striped top,
Mads Nørgaard.
Leather trousers,
Asli Polat.Gold hoop
earrings, Mei-Li
Rose. Gold flower
earrings, TinyOm.
Gold rings, from a
selection, Bee
Goddess, Jane
Koenig and Maya
Magal. Jewellery
worn throughout



GETTING DRESSED



OF YOU **CLEAR OUT** YOUR

WARDROBE AT LEAST **ONCE**

AYEAR

FASHION EDITOR'S TIP

'Give yourself a deadline to rework those pieces you never wear or ditch them. If you're really ruthless, operate a one-in, one-out policy. There are so many places you can sell pieces that were once loved, such as vestiairecollective.com."

> OF YOU HAVE A **FLOORDROBE INSTEAD OF A WARDROBE**

72% OF YOU HAVE **BOUGHTANEW** WARDROBE FOR A **NEW JOB**

A UNIFORM LIBERATED ME

How Senior Commissioning Editor Hannah Swerling found herself in a Breton tee and high-waisted jeans

Preppy, boho, hip hop, tomboy: during my teens and early 20s, I roamed aimlessly from one style identity to the next. I loved clothes, but had a tenuous hold on the kind of girl or woman I wanted to project. I never really thought about fashion in those terms; I just wanted to wear nice things. My fashion whims were as changeable as my music taste - you could find me in oversized Maharishi pants while nodding to Dr. Dre one day, or swaying to the Backstreet Boys dressed in pedal pushers and a 'nice top' the next.

This sartorial meandering suited me fine until I reached my mid 20s and

> started working in fashion. Suddenly, the language of fashion was all around mein the pages of the magazine I worked on and on the poised, confident women I worked with. I hadn't found my voice.

I was young, naive and a little bit shy, and I wanted

to find a way to feel more confident and be taken seriously. Through a process of trial and error, I started to make sense of what to wear and, without too much heartache, hit upon the pieces that to this day make me feel comfortable, self-assured and, most of all, like me.

Whatever I have worn for the past decade or so has pretty much been a version of the same few building blocks: high-waisted jeans/skirts/ trousers, the perfect T-shirt (usually white or Breton of some sort) and pretty but unfussy dresses. How had it taken me two-and-a-half decades to realise that trousers aren't the enemy and that a high waist is best, accentuating my small waist and obscuring my less-celebrated hips? Yes, my colour palette is the stuff of Iris Apfel's nightmares - black, white, navy, grey and khaki. I love colour on other people, but can only tolerate it in small doses on me.

The uniform I created for myself is functional, but it also makes me feel like the stylish woman I always aspired to be. And with a slick of red lipstick or a bold accessory, it finally feels like I'm speaking the language.>



HEADOVER FLATS

When a doctorended Editor in Chief Lorraine Candy's love affair with heels, she made a surprising discovery

I haven't worn heels for three years. Not once. This wouldn't be unusual for a woman in another walk of life, but it's unprecedented for the Editor in Chief of a fashion magazine. I am 100% happy with every part of my body but one thing: my height – I'm 5ft 2in tall. Up until 2012 I could easily compensate for this, as I saw it, lack of stature. My shoe cupboard was glorious.

There were platforms, stilettos and my personal favourite: the Chloé wedge. I had vintage pairs, high-street must-haves, one-offs made for me by Rupert Sanderson and Nicholas Kirkwood and beloved rare Manolos I kept for decoration because they were too delicate to wear outside. I wore heels like a warrior. They gave me confidence to stride into meetings and cocktail parties filled with powerful people. I couldn't go into a 'money meeting' without adding four inches to my height.

Every morning I dressed from the shoe up, a heel adding femininity, and often colour, to my minimal, androgynous look. Then, overnight, it all changed. I'd ignored the niggling pain for months before I went to see a foot doctor who, after an X-ray, told me I had arthritis in

both feet and should stop wearing heels or the consequences would be surgery (the pain wasn't caused by the shoes - it was genetic).

I was devastated because, apart from the confidence they gave me, I am a shoe size seven-and-a-half (or 42) and the only flat I could wear

without looking ridiculous was the flipflop. Initially, I clung to a kitten heel as my go-to shoe, but realised that they added nothing to my confidence levels. Then I decided to accept my fate.

With the help of ELLE Fashion Director Anne-Marie Curtis I tried on brogues, ballet pumps and, my usual shoe taboo, trainers. I was also very lucky, the style gods were looking down on me and my heel ban coincided with the emergence of the power flat. Suddenly everyone was wearing a flat shoe on the catwalk and in the front row. Designers, led by Phoebe Philo and Stella

'I've slipped into a different kind of stride. Now, more than ever, it's not about what I'm wearing, it's about the way I'm wearing it'

Leather jacket, YOUR Acne Studios **FUNCTIONAL** Cotton shirt. palmer//harding. UNIFORM Cotton trousers. Next. Leather shoes, Chanel 47% OF YOU **OWN A PAIR OF** BALLET **PUMPS** 32% OF YOU **OWN A PAIR OF BLACK JEANS** 23% OF YOU OWNA WHITE SHIRT 45% OF YOU **WEAR BLACK TROUSERS ATLEAST ONCE A WEEK**

McCartney, were introducing flat after flat. This was more than a flash in the pan, this was a style keeper and so I began to create a new 'shoedrobe'.

I took to wearing red lipstick to counteract the more masculine feel of a flat shoe with my trouser suits (plus, you have to get your 'sexy' where you can when you don't wear heels). Finding the right footwear for dresses proved a challenge, but eventually I found a ballet pump with attitude from Jimmy Choo, and a host of styles by Tabitha Simmons' new collection.

My hallelujah moment was the Stan

Smith for adidas trainer. This giant, white shoe is the most terrifying footwear for a reformed heel addict with long feet. But, spurred on by the fashion team's encouraging words, I worked out I could wear it with a longer, wider trouser or a 'flirty' summer dress. So while I still mourn the loss of my 'work height', as I called it, I've slipped into a different kind of stride. Now, more than ever, it's not about what I'm wearing, it's about the way I'm wearing it. And I have learnt one very valuable piece of fashion advice you should know: the silver shoe goes with everything. Fact.

GETTING DRESSED

43% OF YOU PREFER TO SHOP

INSTORE

OF YOU LIKE BUYING

> **ONLINE MORE**

OF YOU DO **BOTH**

MORE THAN HALF OF YOU PREFER TO SHOP ALONE (11% shop with friends, 13% with your partner, 17% shop with your mum)

ELLE FASHION EDITOR'S TIP

'Find some quick wins for speed. Make time to put together some failsafe looks so you can nail it every time without any of the emotional hassle when you're busy.'

> YOUHAVEAN **AVERAGE OF**

ODD SOCKS





OF YOU DECIDE WHAT TO WEAR

THAT MORNING

WHO DECIDE THE

NIGHT BEFORE

(the remaining 6% are very organised and decide at the beginning of the week)

ELLE FASHION EDITOR'S TIP

'Invest in new underwear (including socks) every six months. If you start with great basics, everything else grows from there.'

1N3 OF YOU HAVE REFUSED TO GO OUT

BECAUSE YOU COULDN'T FIND THE RIGHT LOOK



WHEN AN LBD IS A BIG CHALLENGE

Deputy Editor Lotte Jeffs swapped androgyny for a little black dress

I wore my first LBD at 30. Slipping it over my head, feeling the cool silk against my skin, was so unlike my usual pulling-on and buttoning-up of clothes – it felt strange, but I liked it. Crisp white shirts are my thing, normally – blazers, trouser suits, tight black jeans; my work clothes are smart and androgynous. Eveningwear for me is about confidence and control. The pull of a tightly buttoned shirt collar against my neck, the weight of silver cuff-

When I became

an adult, I was

too busy dating

girls in little

black dresses

to think I

could be that

woman myself"

links or the gentle thud of leather loafers reminding me always of 'me'.

In my 20s, I was into the idea of 'queering' my gender identity. Sometimes I dressed like a boy, slicking back my hair and wearing oversized shirts and baggy jeans to experience the thrill

of 'passing' as male and the sense of power that comes with it. I've never wanted to look girlie. I hadn't worn a dress since I was seven and my mum would put me in pretty Oilily smocks and tie bows in my hair – I didn't mind, though. Clothes, whether pretty skirts or dungarees, were all the same to me then – boring, not toys.

When I became an adult, I was too busy dating girls who wore little black dresses to think I could be that woman myself. But when I turned 30, something changed. I started feeling really good about my body. I'd been working out for an hour every day for six months - I'd just split up with my partner and I was feeling motivated and excited about a new start.

I was strong, toned and generally feeling healthy and happy. I wanted to show it off. So my friend Orsolya, a fashion stylist, took me on a shopping mission to buy my first little black dress. It was a shift, from Zara (I wasn't ready to break the bank on such a brave new purchase yet), and had gold studs along the round

neckline, but otherwise it was just a chic, no-frills LBD.

As much as I love the ritual of putting on a tuxedo and doing up a bow-tie, I couldn't resist how easy this dress was to wear – you just slip it on, zip it up and, bam, it's a party. Shoes, Orsolya will tell you, were a whole other matter. She tried to get me in stilettos but, as the highest heels I'd owned up to that point were on my Nike Air Force 1s, it was a struggle. We settled on some comfy black Topshop sandals with a chunky silver heel I could walk in.

This first dress was my fashion epiphany - I wore it to a black-tie dinner and felt great. There was something so liberating about having just a single piece of fabric swooshing around me, rather than the usual layers of vest, shirt and jacket. I now own four black dresses; one ribbed, cotton, sleeveless number from Swedish label Samsoe & Samsoe has even snuck into my work wardrobe.

Don't get me wrong, I still love my Helmut Lang blazers and Theory suits, but I've learnt to love being that woman in the little black dress sometimes as well. WHEN GETTING
DRESSED

81%
OF YOU PUT
YOUR KNICKERS
ON FIRST,
FOLLOWED BY
YOUR BRA (14%)

8% of you put your socks on first

ELLE FASHION EDITOR'S TIP

'Take a 'second look' selfie. Snap a picture of yourself once you're dressed so you have another view of how you look other than the mirror.'

67%
OF YOU DON'T
WEAR
MATCHING
UNDERWEAR

Above: Silk bra,
Calvin Klein. Silk
briefs, La Perla
Opposite:
Metal chain
necklace, Saint
Laurent. Cotton
tank top, Acne
Studios at Dover
Street Market

Photography: David Abrahams. Additional photography: Victoria Adamson. Make-up: Philippe Miletto using Chanel Christmas 2015 and Chanel Body Excellence Hair: Johnnie Bites at Frank Agency using Bumbte and bumbte. Modet: Genesis Vallejo Mota at Select. For shopping details, see Address Book

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For the most part, I got it completely wrong. I simply cared too much. dressing affect my status at school?' **MORE THAN** OF18-24s (THE SELFIE GENERATION) **LOOK IN THE** OF 25-34 YFAR MIRROR 3 OR **OLDS WOULD MORE TIMES NOT WEAR AN BEFORE LEAVING OUTFIT YOU'D** THE HOUSE

GETTING DRESSED



How would

WHEN ILEARNT TO STOP TRYING SO HARD

Fashion Assistant Billie Bhatia explores the power of not caring

I have always battled with clothes, especially the ones that didn't fit. Despite being sporty at school, I was still considerably larger than my peers. 'Heavy footed', 'big boned' and 'plump' were how my mum used to describe my chunky teenage fig-

> ure. With my first Topshop purchase, I was so thrilled that it actually fitted me that I didn't really think about the £35 I had spent on a rather vile red, acrylic rollneck.

> In the sixth form, I'd spend time in fitting rooms, agonising over what to buy and wear. Would the Marks

& Spencer trousers make me look more like a member of staff than a student? Did I really want to wear a mustard cape jacket, or did I just wear it because it was from French Connection? Could I squeeze my podgy toes into pointy shoes from Office, like the cool kids? Or should I resign my poor feet to wide-fit shoes from Clarks?

For the most part, I got it completely wrong. I simply cared too much. How would dressing affect my status at school? The entrance to the sixth-form common room was a kind of 'runway', with the queen bees ready to judge whatever outfit walked through. I came up with a game plan to fight the daily anxiety: accessories. And so I distracted people from my boring clothes with rows of necklaces layered over my tops, or bracelets stacked to my elbow. Sometimes I looked like a Christmas tree and sometimes I got the nod of approval. It wasn't until the very end of my time as a student that I realised what I wore didn't matter. The people who were my friends at the beginning of school were still there and the bond was even tighter - pretty pointy shoes or not.

I think I'm still developing my own sense of style. I yearn for a 'That is so me!' eureka moment. I often wake up in the morning, look at my bulging wardrobe and think, 'Ugh, I have nothing to wear!' But who doesn't? I'm now in my purist stage: blue jeans, white shirt and, thankfully, no mustard cape. I like it because it makes me feel put together, but effortlessly so. If a white shirt is good enough for Jane Birkin, it's good enough for me. So who cares what anyone else thinks?

READ IT Find out what the ELLE Editors wear at elleuk.com

ELLE FASHION EDITOR'S TIP

(vs only 34% of 35-45 year olds)

Enlist the help of a good friend who you really trust to help with a wardrobe clear-out. Someone who isn't emotionally attached to anything you own will speed up the process."

205 **ELLEUK.COM**

ALREADY BEEN

PICTURED IN ON

SOCIAL MEDIA

We all have a gateway purchase
— the one buy that opens the
door to more reckless spending. **Lauren Sherman** explores
how splashing out four figures
on a designer piece changed the
way she shopped forever

spende

en years ago, I was living in London
– and off Tesco's 99p range – trying
to save enough cash to move to New
York. I had landed in the UK a week
after graduating from Emerson
College in Boston and embarked
on a placement at a lifestyle-concierge
company that had fortuitously transformed
into a paying job. But a year-and-a-half in,
I was aching to get back to the States to start
what I assumed would be my 'real' life.

For those last few months, I put away as much as I could on my editorial-assistant wages, sending traveller's cheques to my uncle back home so he could save me from my spendthrift self. It worked. Fast-forward a half-decade, and I was living the New York life I had longed for. I had a fantastic partner who would soon become my husband, a charming garden-level flat in Brooklyn with reasonable rent, and a job editing a website that was read by enough fashion insiders to feed my large, hopefully not outsized, ego. So, of course, I needed to buy a Chanel bag.

It happened on a Sunday after one of those requisite New York brunches that I'm too jaded to bother with these days. Two bloody Marys and a tortilla in, I was ready to walk a few blocks to Chanel's downtown boutique. I chose a classic flap bag in black leather with gold hardware. I can't remember



the exact price, but I know it came in at just under £2,000. Or, as my husband put it, '10% of a down payment on a house'.

I wore the bag faithfully for the next few years, making it a symbol of my dream life come true. It's still in rotation, and still the most expensive bag I've ever owned. But I'm certain it won't be the last.

Here's why. Buying that quilted sack of lambskin unlocked something in my brain. It was my gateway purchase - the one that made it OK to spend four figures on a fashion item. One year, it meant a pair of Saint Laurent Chelsea boots (just under £650); another, an Yves Salomon anorak (£975). Last autumn, I found myself at The Row's flagship store on Melrose Place in Los Angeles, buying into Ashley and Mary-Kate Olsen's impeccable taste with a boiled-wool skirt and cashmere sweater. (I'd prefer to hold the price on that one - no one needs to know exact details.) It's not as though I do it often, but I've done it. And it's

Fast-forward
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in £164 billion globally in 2014, according to Bain & Company – has worked hard to get me thinking this way. A decade or two ago, purchasing a fragrance, keychain or logo tee might've been enough to satisfy someone like me, eager to buy into their favourite brand. While those items still exist, they seem to hold less value these days. Instead, you're likely to start with a pair of £500 trainers or a hefty piece of jewellery, which are more expensive and show more savvy. You'll have to be willing to invest more for a handbag: Chanel, Louis Vuitton and Hermès raise prices on a regular basis.

I should say right now that I'm not loaded, or in debt. I manage to make these

ridiculous purchases as I don't do it often, and I don't spend money on much else. But I'm the kind of person who doesn't wait for the end-of-season sale. I'm aware this way of thinking is a little mad.

It is not insane, however, to experience a turning point in your purchase patterns – a moment when it's not so hard to swallow the crazy price tag, whether it's £300 or £3,000. For Virginia Norris, director and co-founder of London communications firm Aisle 8, her gateway purchase was a ➤



For Mandi Lennard, founder of PR company Mandi's Basement, her first was a Louis Vuitton monogram coat – an antidote to a dreary holiday cooped up with allergies. 'I went straight to Louis Vuitton when I got back,' she says. 'The first place I wore it was a gallery opening, and I felt like Dapper Dan ruling Harlem in the Eighties. It cost a fortune, and even 20 years later I covet it.'

The gateway item doesn't have to be a fashion piece. For software developer Alenka Abraham, it was a 'massive computer with a dual processor' that cost more than £2,000. 'My dad thought I was crazy,' she says. Now, Abraham, who owns a business with her partner, has fun buying more whimsical items, such as a Maje winter coat. 'I've always had a shopping addiction,' she explains. 'Now I have a baby, I'm an online shopaholic.'

'Shopaholic'. It's a playful term that can take on a more serious meaning. You could liken gateway purchases to gateway drugs: something that starts out innocently but becomes unhealthy as the action escalates. 'What is poisonous is someone who has an addiction to the thrill of the transaction,' says Paco Underhill, author of What Women Want: The Science of Female Shopping. 'If you're buying stuff that's just sitting in bags, that's a shopping sickness.'

iving in New York City, one often hears stories of women residing in shoebox studios, squandering their salaries on ready-to-wear: a junior department store-buyer \$25,000 in debt; the magazine editor who subsists on free champagne and canapés in order to afford the wardrobe she thinks she needs. I, for one, no longer flinch when a common handbag boasts

'When the world didn't end and no one told me off for spending so much money, I started to buy more and more'



an uncommon price of £2,000. But this mild addiction to luxury – if you want to call it that – exists far beyond our rarefied world. A couple of years back, my university friend Victoria Locke, who works at a real-estate firm in Connecticut, found herself in just the circumstances that Underhill talks about. T would buy so much at once, I wouldn't try anything on in the store,' she tells me. 'Once I snuck all the bags home, I would try the clothes on and anything that didn't fit right just went to the back of the closet.'

Victoria had to make a change, so she quit shopping for a year. And last month she and her husband bought their first home, which was made possible partly by dialling back on spending.

I'm happy to say I do not bury bags at the back of the closet. I'm the type who hangs her new purchases on the bedroom door so that she can fall asleep looking at them. Why? Because wearing, and owning, nice clothes makes me feel good. Not only euphoric, but also like I have my life together. If I was discerning enough to choose this piece, I must be discerning about other things in my life, right? A great outfit warrants respect and admiration, which are both things that I, and most others, want.

But I'd be delusional not to admit that there have been times in my life when my penchant for shopping has spiralled out of my control. The notion of 'reining it in' is one that I, and fellow collectors of labelled things, frequently discuss. I have bought things that I didn't actually want, including a pair of unflattering leather leggings that I wore,

badly, for as many winters as I could, and an impossible-to-walk-in architectural heel.

Instant access to these things via the internet makes it easier to make hasty purchases, and can result in a closet full of regrets. ('The driving force of consumption in the modern age is convenience, Underhill posits.) Indeed, e-commerce sites have made it safe, simple and satisfying to buy in one click. 'A lot of research has been done on improving usability and website persuasiveness,' says Guido Jansen, a cognitive psychologist who studies online consumer behaviour. 'This results in consumers being more and more comfortable with buying bigger and bigger products. Nowadays, people even buy new cars online.'

On the less thrilling side of things, it can also feel a bit shameful - especially for someone like me, a child of a single mother who struggled to pay the rent. Who am I to squander my cash, hard-earned or not, on bad fashion choices? As the prices for ready-to-wear climb, how far am I willing to go?

And yet, when it comes to the items on which I've spent the most, I couldn't be happier. Maybe it's because they were more expensive, so I took more time considering the purchase beforehand. Maybe it's because I'm eager to get my money's worth. All I know is that the women with whom I spoke were proud, and pleased, with their first big-ticket purchases. 'I'm not sure it opened the gateway to spending large, but it certainly reinforced my ethos of elevating scruffy gear with one magnificent piece!' Lennard says. For Abraham, it made her think more about quality. 'I'd rather have one really nice designer piece that looks amazing than 20 fast-fashion tops that I Oxfam away each year,' she says. 'I prefer buying clothes that I love and want to keep.

For me, extravagant spending has, strangely enough, pushed me to shop less. I feel more satisfied with purchases, and I have way more fun plotting and planning the next one. In fact, I think it might be time to upgrade that Chanel. I've always liked the Boy bag.

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Jane Birkin with two of her three daughters, the late Kate Barry and Charlotte Gainsbourg



Mother | OVE

No relationship compares to that of a **mother and daughter**.

Nurturing, all-consuming, challenging and life-enhancing, the complex **emotional and physical pull** defines us throughout our lives.

Here, three writers celebrate both sides of the relationship



HAVING A BABY MAKES LIFE EASIER

by Emma Brockes

am a single mother of five-month-old twins, and believe me, I know how that sounds. Even without the single mother thing, my life at this point should be chaos. I should be frazzled, burnt out, panicked. I went back to work a few weeks ago (I live in New York, where standard maternity leave is 12 weeks, and anything over that is considered wildly decadent and European) and I should be experiencing the catastrophic schism between my old and new identities. I should, in short, be a total wreck.

And, of course, I'm exhausted. On those days that I don't have help, I constantly run circuits of my apartment, ferrying

dirty muslins from the sofa to the laundry, dirty bottles from the bedroom to the kitchen, and dirty babies from the high chair to the changing table, to the bouncy seat to the buggy. I'm pretty sure the mileage is equal to a marathon a day. At night, things are either blissfully calm or resemble a hell-scape by Edvard Munch.

I was prepared for these things to happen. They are simply the cost of having kids and I judged my two girls to be worth it. What I didn't expect is the ways in which the babies have made my life easier.

In the broadest of terms, the two things that keep people awake at night are versions of the questions, where am I going and where have I been? Or rather, what am I doing and what have I done? Before I had the babies, the background



'BEFORE I HAD THE BABIES, THE BACKGROUND CONDITION OF MY LIFE WAS ONE OF CONTENTMENT COMBINED WITH VAGUE ANXIETY' condition of my life was one of contentment combined with vague anxiety. Was I where I wanted to be? Had the conversations I'd had that day gone the way I wanted them to? Were the decisions I made five, 10 or 15 years ago the right ones? What was I doing tomorrow?

All of that fussiness has evaporated in the furnace of my babies' first five months. Firstly, nothing keeps me awake at night. Nothing. I lie down and am out cold in two seconds.

Second, once you have a kid, regrets about your past become inadmissible. As in *Back To The Future*, every single detail of your life prior to conception had to have happened precisely as it did in order for your baby or babies to have been born. There's nothing mystical about this; it's a function of

evolutionary psychology - the way we look at our babies and judge them inevitable - but no less powerful for that.

Other things become easier, too. You get twice as much done in half the time, simply because you have to. Motherhood is supposed to involve a huge amount of guilt, but I have found it to be the opposite. (Single parenthood in this scenario is easier than its alternatives; I have to work or none of us eat, so I never feel guilty about having a nanny.) Before I had kids, I would spend weekends longing to pass out and binge-watch TV, while feeling obliged to go out and improve myself. All that has gone. The tiny bit of downtime I have between feed cycles is spent lying down and I don't feel the slightest bit guilty; goddamnit I've earned it.

The biggest shift, however, has to do with this cliche about kids giving one's life 'meaning'. I've always thought it nonsense; my life was perfectly meaningful before I had my girls, and it would have gone on being meaningful had I not had them.

What having a baby does do, is get rid of the anxiety around 'meaning' in the first place. We are constantly being told to live in the moment and nothing enables this like wrangling two babies. There is something quite lazy about having children. You don't have to justify yourself to the same extent any more. 'Oh, look, you think, I did something important!' Or rather, 'I did something quite important.' Or, at any rate, 'I did something.' Having a kid shouldn't qualify as an achievement – it's a form of self-gratification like any other – but society considers it one and frankly, I'll take it.

And of course, having babies makes you value things you took for granted before. Free time has never been more precious. I have never enjoyed simply sitting down as much as I do now. Every day I get the girls in bed by 8pm is a huge achievement. I was in my late 30s when I had them and pretty jaded. Now I watch my baby laughing hysterically like she just smoked a joint and is wigging out at the shape of a leaf or a Coke can, and everything is fresh and hilarious.

All of these things are incredibly ordinary. But isn't valuing the ordinary a definition of happiness? I look at my babies and think, 'Yes, of course, you two. How lucky I am.'



'YOU GET TWICE AS MUCH DONE IN HALF THE TIME SIMPLY BECAUSE YOU HAVE TO'

Left: Emma (left) with her mum Paula and cousin Victoria (right)



Jane Birkin and her daughters

y@NELLFRIZZELL

MY MOTHER'S TIGER LOVE

by Nell Frizzell

ttakes a special kind of woman to tell you that you have men's legs, that you've forgotten to put on deodorant, that you're going grey,



you need to wear lipstick, your bedroom is dingy, your boyfriend has moved on, you've got bad posture, you dress like a man and might never find love again. That woman is called a mother. And if we're lucky enough, many of us have our own.

From short legs to speed cooking, thick hair to impatience, thin lips to a swift wit, my mother doesn't just take credit for most of my attributes, she seems to see my body as a repository for all the strengths, weaknesses, idiosyncracies and failures of her own genes. She knitted me together in her womb and so, by extension, she has the right to pick me apart now.

I know where she gets it, of course, this tiger-like love and knack for criticism. She was schooled by the Zen master of the crippling one-liner: her own mother. Well into her nineties, my stately, Queen-like grandmother would hold forth in her large vibrating armchair telling my mother that she'd lost her looks, that I had got 'meaty' and that my sister looked like some-

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'THE BITTER THINGS
OUR MOTHERS TELL
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THOUGHTLESSNESS,
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A LACK OF LOVE'

girls whose mothers were on a diet were twice as likely to be aware of, and have ideas about, dieting. As young women, we learn by example, which all too often means inheriting a disordered attitude to food and dissatisfaction with our bodies, along with a great aunt's wedding ring and collection of mismatched Tupperware.

Luckily, my mother seems sanguine about my size. It may be many times bigger than my sister's and it may occasionally slide into saturated girth, but my body doesn't, on the whole, seem to cause Mum any sleepless nights. If only the same could be said for my grammar, my love life, my career, my mental health and my clothes. And therein lies the rub: our mothers worry about our bodies, our lives, our loves and our losses because we are the flesh of their flesh. They made us, they quite literally brought us into the world, they poured out the best of their genes and the worst of their habits in bringing us up and so it is little wonder they struggle sometimes to draw the line between us and them.

The bitter things our mothers tell us are almost always born of thoughtlessness, not cruelty. It is a lack of care, not a lack of love, that makes a mother tell her daughter that she shouldn't wear trousers with those thighs. That she's spent the savings on a new kitchen because they've given up waiting for her to get married. That she's got nothing to be anxious about. That she 'only needs to lose a bit of weight'. Or, in the case of one friend, to stand in front of the window of a charity shop just days after a break-up, aged 17, and sigh, 'But who's ever going to marry us?'

My mother and I fit together like spoons and are just as likely to stir things up. We may argue and criticise, pick holes and pick fights, split hairs and spit dust, but it is only because we are forever jumbled up in a love that cannot be undone. As Charles Dickens never said: I am the best of her, I am the worst of her. I am her wisdom and her foolishness, her spring of hope and her winter of despair.

thing that belonged in a pie. She loved us, defended us till her death, poured out coffee and affection to us endlessly but, my god, was she quick to point out our faults. And so, the sting in the tale, the bite in the embrace and the criticism in the wisecrack passed down from generation to generation like freckles. I can only imagine what I'll say to my daughters, if I'm lucky enough to have any.

According to a survey carried out by netmums.com, mothers are twice as likely to be critical of their daughters than their sons, over a quarter said they loved their sons in a different way to their daughters and 21.5% said they let their sons get away with more. It is Monica and Ross Geller writ large. For many daughters, this 'different' quality of love is characterised by an attitude to weight. Or, to put it bluntly, an obsession with fat. 'My mum was constantly making comments and having chats about my weight,' one woman told me anonymously on Twitter. 'It has led me to have terrible self-esteem issues, including an on-and-off eating disorder she never took seriously and bouts of neardepression.' Dr Leslie Sim, clinical director of the Mayo Clinic, has argued that the mother-daughter relationship is 'the most important influence on a daughter's body image,' while psychologists Beth A. Abramovitz and Leann L. Birch report that even at the age of five,

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HER VOICE IN MY HEAD

by Lena de Casparis

y mum, Anna, died on a sunny afternoon on 16 July 2006. My family and I had been sitting around her bed for weeks, holding her (and each other), saying goodbye, and playing a hell of a lot of Scrabble. My dad was on the loo when the exact moment finally came – but you know what they say about best-laid plans.

She had a brutal form of Parkinson's that, after six years, fully took over her body at age 56. I don't agree with people who say you can fight an illness – it's medical – but she was certainly never tamed by it. In spirit, she remained that same 18-year-old radical student, the one who climbed over the police barriers in Paris in 1968 at the university protest, right until that summer's day.

Her death came just a few days after my 21st birthday. Not quite the same Jägermeister-fuelled pissups my friends enjoyed to celebrate their coming of age. Relatives told me she'd held on to see me through my entire adolescence. I think it was more coincidental than that, but their words were comforting all the same.

In the years since, I've mainly missed the mundane aspects of having a mum. Watching TV together accompanied by her incessantly groaning about how mind numbing it all was. Cooking ratatouille on the first day of every autumn and sharing a chopping board for the mass of aubergine. No matter how many times I've tried her recipe, mine never tastes as good as ours. I often long for the crackle of her laugh when she witnesses some poor sod's misfortune. Normally me, spilling jam down my school shirt. And how I crave for her cold hands stroking the nape of my neck to send me to sleep.

Of course, her absence is more complicated, sometimes torturing. But as the years pass I've come to realise that if you get along with your mum as I did with mine, she never dies. I knew her so well that she stays with me, her voice in my head, it lives on.

The two of us had 21 years together, after all. As an only child from friendly but separated parents, most of the time it was just us against the world.

She taught me everything: my first words in English, then she cursed me daily for not speaking French (she was fluent in five languages, I'm clearly not). She was the one who found me crying on the bathroom floor when I freaked out about starting my period aged 13. The expert chef who made me my first bacon sandwich after an arduous, year-long animal-rights-fuelled, 'no meat' protest at 16. My teacher, my cleaner, my counsel, and, of course, my chauffeur. I wish I could apologise for the wasted hours she spent waiting in her Golf outside friends' houses, school halls and sports centres.

But mostly she was the woman who showed me how to be a feminist and demand equality. Having dedicated her life to politics and women's rights in her job as an academic, and in every aspect outside,











she led by example. She was a walking, often yelling, manual on how to be strong, independent, resilient, and to always fight for other women, in the way she always fought for me.

Now I have to fight for me. But she's always there in my ear, telling me how to throw the ultimate uppercut. When I came out of a five-year relationship, all I wanted was to climb into her king-sized bed and cry into her soft Habitat-cased pillows. Instead I heard her voice saying, 'You don't need a man to make you happy,' a refrain that had played like a record on repeat throughout my childhood, and it

made me tough.

And when I was made redundant from my job and worried that I'd never be employable again (I get my melodramatic side from her, too), I knew in my gut that she'd have never let that discourage her. Sure enough I had a new job within weeks, just like she would have predicted.

The awful reality is that there will come a point in your life when you, like me, will live without your mum. Nobody wants their parents to outlive them; it would be too cruel.

Shortly after my mum died, one of my best friends poured us each a huge glass of cheap white wine and said, 'Well, thank god it's happened to you first, now you can help me through when I have to do it.'

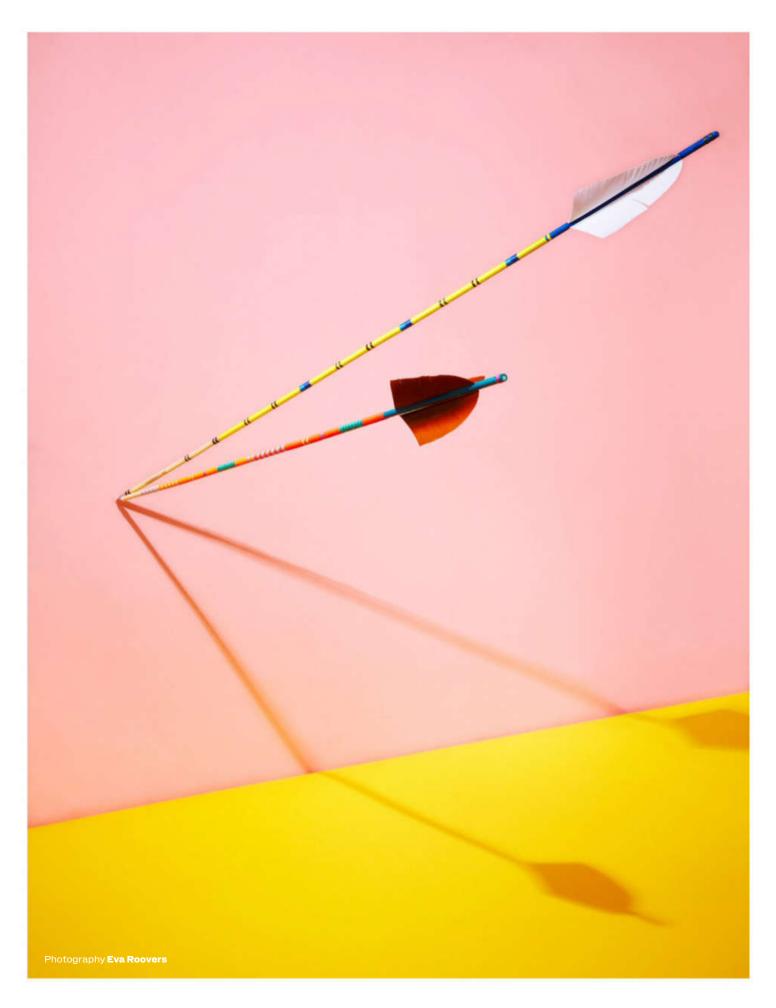
On the surface it might not seem like the most soothing of remarks, but in reality it brought me the most solace and still does today. You see, in my darkest hours, the ones where I feel entirely alone and desperately sad, somehow the knowledge that it comes to us all helps.

But the thing that brings me the most comfort is that while my mum may no longer be with me in the exact ways as yours, her legacy and everything she taught me will never die.

Motherhood, well, it's immortal.







Y@DANIJSHAPIRO

Don't like me? I don't care...

Criticism is hard to bear for all of us, but how do you turn it from a negative to a positive? **Dani Shapiro** has found a way to ignore the haters and embrace a new confidence

ack in my early twenties, during a brief and soul-deadening stint of auditioning for American television adverts, soap operas and the occasional feature film, each morning I climbed wearily out of bed and tried to gear myself up for the day. This was my routine: I sweated through two back-toback aerobics classes (it was the Eighties) and then came home and weighed myself to be sure I hadn't gained a pound overnight. Then I did my hair using hot rollers and hairspray, I spent half an hour applying make-up, and, finally, I assembled an outfit for whatever role I was up for, which might call for anything from a power suit to a bathing suit. I knew I'd be facing people whose job it was to judge me from the shadows. I'd state my name into the camera as cheerfully as I could. Even my name was a mask, one I'd been advised by my agent to invent, since Shapiro was 'too ethnic'. I did whatever I was asked: a few lines of Mamet, Wasserstein, or Dr Pepper.

'Thanks for coming in, honey,' they'd say. 'We'll be in touch.'

Of course, they rarely got in touch. I'd hear from my agent that they were going in a different direction. Someone taller. Or a redhead. Or whatever. All I ever heard, thrumming beneath the ostensible rea-

sons, was that I wasn't good enough - not even to smile fetchingly and hold up a can of soda. 'Look, they just didn't find you appealing,' my agent once told me. I lived in a debilitating state of chronic insecurity, which I dealt with by exercising more, starving myself further, going blonder. I was operating under the delusion that if only I could burnish myself into some sort of perfection, I'd be chosen. Truth be told, I was a lousy actress. I was self-conscious, tongue-tied, prone to blushing in front of the camera. I was careering down the wrong path, trying with all my might to squeeze myself into somebody else's life.

But the cliche was true: One of my alltime favourite book titles is *Someday This Pain Will Be Useful to You*, by Peter Cameron, and when I made the improbable leap from wannabe starlet to novelist, the rejection and criticism indeed turned out to be useful. Around the workshop table in the graduate writing programme at Sarah Lawrence College in New York, students often broke down in tears when their work was criticised. But I welcomed it. When I sent my stories to literary magazines and received standard rejection letters in reply, I didn't take it personally, I took it as a sign that I needed to hone my craft.

Which was fortunate, because I didn't begin my writing career anointed by the literary world as a star in the making. I collected a filing cabinet full of rejections and published three novels that didn't get much attention before writing a memoir that caught fire – and suddenly everybody seemed to be writing not just about my book, but about me. That book, *Slow Motion*, was a coming-of-age story about my Orthodox Jewish upbringing and ensuing rebellion, which involved a relationship with an older, married man; one that ended only when I was shocked to my senses by a car accident that killed my father.

There were lovely surprises, like opening up a magazine to see a glowing review written by a heroine of mine. But the negative attention was swift and vicious. The word 'bimbo' was used as a caption beneath my photo in the New York Observer. A male writer I admired wrote a highly personal character assassination of me in New York magazine. I'd quote it for you, but I didn't keep a copy (and I can't find it online, I swear); I cried for three days in my apartment. Once again I felt I was being judged not for what I wrote, but for who I was. My life, reviewed.

For a solitary writer sitting at her desk, stuck in her work, nursing simmering insecurities, all it takes is one impulsive click and she can become instantly privy to a soaring chorus of voices: 'You're awesome! No, you suck! You're brilliant! You're the scum of the earth!' And, if she gives the

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voices too much credence, she won't be able to write another word.

So I'm going to conduct an experiment, perhaps a dangerous one, right in the middle of this piece. I mean, what the hell – I'm talking about criticism, right? I go to the popular online magazine salon.com, where I recently published a somewhat inflammatory essay on the meaning of memoir. At the time I didn't check out the responses – the site is known for its vicious comments section: 'Self-serving, patronising, sarcastic, agonisingly long'; 'One way to plug a silly little self-indulgent book no one is reading'; 'At least I now know I never have to read any Dani Shapiro.'

Whoa. The level of invective makes the bimbo reference seem like a sweet missive from another era. These people aren't just nursing a mild dislike, they hate me. I am reviled. Now I'm in full-on masochistic mode – this self-punitive stuff tends to create a pile-on effect – so I click on the Amazon reviews for my last couple of books. There are plenty of five-star comments, but my eyes glide over them and home in on only the poisonous ones: 'Absolutely ridiculous'; 'Reeking of insincerity'; 'Whiny, spoiled, pretentious crybaby.'

I feel nauseated - momentarily. But I notice something surprising in my reaction: this toxic binge-surfing feels a little like eating too much junk food. There's a weird, sort of icky rush, and then... then it's gone. These are people who don't know me, don't like me. Nor are they criticising me in incisive ways I might learn from.

This realisation is followed by a minor epiphany: I don't have to make them like me. I'm no longer that starving girl in a swimsuit, hopelessly pirouetting. I'm just a writer sitting alone in a room, struggling to make words line up on the page in a way that may communicate something true.

A friend recently posted this on Instagram: 'I'd rather be someone's shot of whisky than everyone's cup of tea.' I spent a whole lot of energy trying to be everyone's cup of tea and a) it wasn't fun, and b) it didn't work. I'd wager that we all do it at some point - contort ourselves into peoplepleasing pretzels - and I'd wager the roots of this can be found somewhere in our early lives. Who was it that first made us believe something was wrong with us?

I have a now-teenage son, and I remember one day dropping him off at nursery.

In the car park, he saw a boy he was friends with, and he ran over to say hello. The boy turned his back - physically dismissed my son with the kind of innocent cruelty children can display - and my heart broke a little. Those injuries, small or large, form our sense of self. And a sense of our own value is how we can parse criticism and rejection - take what's useful and shrug off the rest.

For me, that injury can be best summed up by a picture I keep buried in a family photo album, quite possibly the only existing image of my half sister Susie and me. I'm around 11, so Susie must be 26. My hair is cut into a nerdy mop and I have a mouthful of braces. Susie is in some sort of batik thing, her long wavy hair reaches her waist, and she's wearing granny glasses. I remember the moment: I'm over the moon to be with my big sister. She's the coolest person I know: she lives in the city! She's a psychoanalyst! In the photograph, I'm smiling a huge, painfully goofy smile at whoever is snapping the picture. And Susie is staring at me. Her lips are tight, her eyes narrowed, her forehead creased. If a thought bubble appeared over her head, it would read something like: 'Silly, stupid girl.'

I spent years trying to change Susie's mind about me. It was hopeless, though I had no way of knowing this. She wished my mother had never married our father, hence that I had never been born. Psychoanalyse that. Growing up with a sister who was profoundly critical of me created a pattern that quite possibly led me all the way to those dim television studios where I strained to be accepted: for much of my adult life, I looked for versions of Susie everywhere. At parties, on dates, in the classrooms where I taught, I sought out the Susie-face. I looked for the person who just wasn't into me. On some level, I believed they had X-ray vision; that they

'The negative attention to my memoir was swift and vicious, and I felt I was being judged not for what I wrote, but for who I was. My life, reviewed'



saw deeper into me than others, to my true essence. And so I engaged in an endless and exhausting effort to win them over.

I can pin down the precise moment when I realised this had changed. As is true of many seemingly seismic psychic shifts, it had been happening slowly all along, but I became aware of it one recent evening in Connecticut at a crowded holiday party. The host introduced me to another guest and then left us alone to chat. As we exchanged the perfunctory pleasantries - 'How do you know Lisa? Do you live nearby?' - I saw her scanning me. Her forehead creased. Her lips tightened. It was Susieface. I was about to start the tap dance when, just as abruptly, I stopped.

'I'm going to get a drink,' I said. I wheeled around and headed to the bar. I wasn't worried about being rude; I was done. I felt it right there - the freedom of not caring whether this person who didn't know me had disdain for me. I felt her eyes on my back as I walked away. It was all I could do not to fist-bump the people around me. I'd won a hard-fought battle with my 11-year-old self, who longed for her big sister's approval and felt deformed and weakened when it was withheld.

There is a beautiful Hindu prayer in which people ask to be led from the unreal to the real. It seems to me that when we inhabit ourselves - when we say, 'This is who I am, in all my flawed humanity' - we are taking a step toward being most real. And when we buy into the opinions of strangers whose feelings about us may be based on random data, ranging from something they once read to what we're wearing and even to their own projections, we are being governed by the unreal.

As I've written this piece, I haven't once thought about how it will be received. If I had, I wouldn't have been able to write it: I'm revealing quite a lot about myself, some of it quite painful and unflattering. But as I come to the end, now I can imagine some possible reactions: 'Humblebrag'; 'Who the hell does she think she is?'; 'How dare she dismiss all those online reviews just because she doesn't like them?'. The ugly comments from the past may even be flung back at me: 'You are a spoiled, pretentious crybaby.' But that's OK. I'm no longer dancing in the shadows, I'm a shot of whisky – just not for everyone.

And so I close the door. I write these words. I don't click over to Google to see what people think. In the silence - in the absence of all those voices - here is where I discover who I am.



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Do you have \[\bigcup \bigcup \bigcup \\ (Fear of life offline) \]

WE CAN NOW EDIT AND ART-DIRECT OUR LIVES ONLINE LIKE NEVER BEFORE. BUT HOW WOULD OUR FRIENDS

AND FOLLOWERS REACT IF WE REMOVED ALL THE FILTERS AND PRESENTED OUR EXISTENCE IN REAL LIFE?

ROBYN WILDER BRAVES NEW FRONTIERS AND FINDS OUT WHAT IT'S LIKE TO LIVE AN UNCURATED EXISTENCE



Whenever Bora Bora woman pops up on my Instagram feed with her poreless skin and poolside life, I suddenly feel catastrophically unattractive. This woman looks the way I might if I had a stylist, won the lottery and had never heard of potatoes. It's galling. Suddenly my own messy fishtail braid is a knot of malnourished rat tails. My outfit is too generic, my life not as sun-kissed and aspirational. 'Why am I even sharing photos if I'm so lumpen and uninteresting?' I find myself thinking. It seems searingly unfair that such a glamorous creature could even exist in the same universe as one in which I have a wandering right eye and







an unhoovered living room. Obviously, though, you're never going to see my wandering right eye or unhoovered living room. Just like Bora Bora Lady, and just like anyone who's run a no-make-up shot or #iwokeuplikethis selfie through an image editor (which is pretty much everyone), I'm very active on social media, but only share the most photogenic parts of my life online.

Offline Me cries once a week and still hasn't unpacked all her boxes, seven months after moving house. Online Me, however, is happily raising a bonny child in a sunny, well-kept albeit unhoovered house with nary a frown nor a vomit stain in shot. I've been conditioned by society, my parents, and by the mean girls I went to school with, to keep all that less-than-perfect stuff locked up tight. In his essay about imagery and meaning, Simulacra And Simulation, the philosopher Jean Baudrillard observed that we are becoming increasingly unable to distinguish reality from the imitation of reality. By not challenging the status quo, even Bora Bora woman and I - with my filtered-to-oblivion online self - are contributing to a culture of FOLO.

FOLO is the fear of living life offline, of real life, the dispiriting dissonance that occurs when your own humdrum moments – say, queuing in Lidl on

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'AFTER A ROUGH DAY, AND WITH A FRIDGE FULL OF DECOMPOSING SALAD VEGETABLES [...] IINSTAGRAM MY LEFTOVER CHIPS WITH THE HASHTAG #AVOCADOTOAST' life and face online. The very idea sets my teeth on edge and I have visions of being chased off the internet by villagers with pitchforks the very second I share my first IRL (In Real Life) selfie.

I start with 5,490 Twitter followers, 1,193 Instagram followers and 475 Facebook friends. Can I really go for 10 days unfiltered on social media, and come out alive? Will they still like me?

My 10 days telling the truth online

DAY 1: After a rough day, and with a fridge full of decomposing aspirational salad vegetables, I cheer myself up with a questionable takeaway chicken burger, and ironically Instagram my leftover chips with the hashtag #avocadotoast. I follow several eat-clean devotees, so I'm surprised when my post acquires 58 likes and several more hashtags from my followers, including #eatclean, #wellness and #eatnourishglow. My followers are the best.

DAY 2: Using the hashtag #shoppingaddict, I Instagram my shopping list, which includes tampons and bin-liners, and people compliment my handwriting. Later, I am in Lidl, so I post a picture of Lidl on Twitter, and tag it '#Lidl'. It gets retweeted seven times. People are weird.

DAY 3: A borderline racist rant about 'migrants' appears on Facebook, all dingbat send-'em-all-back terminology and poor spelling, from someone I barely knew at college. My instinct is to ignore it and move on. This time, though, I reply with my own, rather more liberal point of view, with links to relevant news pieces. I'd like to say that this opens my

an unfiltered grey Tuesday afternoon don't measure up to the Facebook update you just read about your friend drinking Aperol Spritz at sunset in Bali.

Social media is inextricably linked with depressive symptoms, claim researchers from the University of Houston. A recent study suggests that the longer you spend on social media browsing the curated highlights of other people's lives, the more isolated, jealous and worthless you can feel - scientists have called this phenomenon 'Facebook depression'.

'It doesn't mean Facebook causes depression,' the study's author, Mai-Ly Steers, has said. 'But that depressed feelings and lots of time on Facebook and comparing oneself with others tend to go hand in hand.'

My friend Sara Levi, a charity information manager, deleted her Facebook account last summer when she found it was actually worsening her existing depression. 'Facebook wasn't doing good things for my self-worth,' she tells me. 'I forgot that people deliberately present their best selves online. I was starting to think that the smiling selfies and status updates about wonderful partners and friends were how everyone lives all the time, rather than snapshots – literally – of one moment in time.

'No one was sharing that they were crying for no reason, or having a panic attack at work, or couldn't face leaving the house today. So I felt no one would understand how I was doing because they all had such marvellous lives. And that I shouldn't bother them or bring them down with my gloom.'

But what would it feel like to show real life? I decide to embark on an adventure and go unfiltered for a week - I will step out from behind the edits and share my

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'I JUST POST AN UNFILTERED SHOT OF MY CURTAINED WINDOW AND WHINGE ABOUT BEING STUCK INSIDE WITH HAYFEVER, THIS RESULTS IN 23 LIKFS' my baby son, who brightens any photograph, but, to my credit, I do look extravagantly decrepit. I hashtag it #wokeuplikethisselfie and wait for the insults. Instead, I get 20 likes. Less than half of my average of 50.

DAY 8: Someone tags me on Facebook with the #widn (What I'm Doing Now) tag. Generally, I'll either ignore something like this, or lightly art-direct a photo that may feature any combination of my baby, a clever-looking book, and some flowers in an interesting vase. Instead, I just post an unfiltered shot of my curtained window and whinge about being stuck inside with hayfever. This results in 23 likes and tons of hayfever remedies. More interestingly, people tell me in the comments what they're doing right now (crocheting; waiting on a scary medical diagnosis; sitting by a pool; shopping), and the conversation becomes about them, not me - something that I'm realising, with some shame, rarely happens on my social media.

DAY 9: Nervously, I share an unfiltered full-body fashion shot on Facebook. All my clothes are from the high street, and my post-baby figure is more Tweedledum than Blake Lively, but the response is mildly positive, with 13 likes and a compliment about my lipstick (Ruby Woo by Mac, of course).

DAY 10: It occurs to me that there are glamorous internet entities whom I follow on Twitter and Instagram, and compare myself to regularly – but I've never actually interacted with them in any way. So I email the brains behind one of my favourite accounts, a relentlessly picturesque Londoner who, when she isn't displaying her perfect thigh gap on a yacht, skips about Notting Hill in haute couture eating massive



Facebook friend's eyes to a broader outlook and we all live happily ever after, but the truth is he calls me a c-word and unfriends me, and it makes absolutely no difference to my life whatsoever.

DAY 4: Technically I'm on LinkedIn to further my career, but I've never got a job out of it, and the same five bizarrely named people like my updates. Despite this, I only update it when I've written a serious, impressive feature. Today I just post, 'I quite fancy a jam sandwich.' Troy St Augustine Squire, Reuters Starbucks III, Ahmed Ahmed, Molly McGee and Samson LaGuardia all approve. Again.

DAY 5: I attend a barbecue and share a boozy ensemble selfie on Facebook and Instagram. It's wonky, people's heads are cut off, my whole face – apart from three double-chins – is obscured by a chicken leg, but we're all grinning like fools. 'You look like you're having an excellent time,' someone comments, which pleases me because we really are, and that may not have come across if we'd all been duck-facing.

DAY 6: Time to be real on Twitter. I've been dreading this. Twitter is where I trot out the random (hopefully, funny) one-liners that pass through my brain. Posting something opinionated or emotional is far beyond my comfort zone. Still, I post that I'm feeling a bit overwhelmed by new motherhood. No one pays me the slightest attention. So later I live-tweet my progress through a packet of Bourbons and the self-loathing that accompanies it, and I get about 20 retweets and lots of LOLs. I'm slightly horrified, though, and later I can't help but delete my tweets.

DAY 7: On Instagram I share a real, unedited, no-make-up selfie from my bed. I slightly cheat by including

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burgers (the dream). When she doesn't respond, I contact the sartorially sound (and very approachable) Susie Verrill, the author of stylish parenting blog mymiloandme.com, whom I have admired from afar for many months.

think we all need to own up to the fact that only the most Stepford Wives among us actually have immaculate lives,' she tells me when I say I'm writing a piece about the simulated reality of social media. 'It's like airbrushing: we all know it goes on, it makes things nice to look at, but it's not realistic.

'That said, I won't include my dogs humping or the washing-up in a snapshot. If I've had a shoddy day, I'll put up a cheery photo of something pretty, rather than post reality - I like following people who put effort into what they upload and I use it as a tool to inspire me, so I like to give the same back.'

So that's it. I've shown the world my uncurated life and lived to tell the tale. I end the experiment with 5,495 Twitter followers, 1,197 Instagram followers, and 474 Facebook friends - I've actually gained followers (although I've lost one Facebook racist). And many of my posts have sparked discussions, and generally made me feel better about myself than any updates I've ever posted for visual or comedic impact.

That's followers, though. My actual real-life friends are a different story. 'Are you feeling depressed?' one texts me. 'All your Instagrams are of closed windows, too many biscuits, and your captions have become paragraphs, suddenly.' Paradoxically, a cousin who lives in Canada is a fan of the new, wordy updates: 'It's just so lovely to hear from you and know what's going on with you.'

However, this little experiment has brought to light several things. First, given that I have largely been whingeing



'I'VE BEEN
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MAGAZINE AD
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TO MAKE ME
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about motherhood and mainlining Bourbons, I might be feeling a little vulnerable, and using social media largely as a means of escape - the way that you might flick through a glossy magazine on a grey day. Second, I might be keeping my online self locked down a little tightly - so much so that I'm a mystery even to family members. And third, I've been comparing myself, my wonky eye and my unhoovered living room to a photoshopped magazine advert that's almost entirely designed to make me covet it.

Somehow, I've forgotten that, in life, we will experience both Aperol Spritzes and queuing in Lidl (at least metaphorically), but we'll only share the former online, and that brands will sponsor particularly scenic social media entities, like Bora Bora lady (and often style and professionally photograph them within an inch of their lives), and that's where aspiration can tumble over into feelings of inadequacy.

Obviously, when I return to Instagram I will remain a devotee to the filters Lark and Clarendon (frankly, I live in England and the weather is not kind to my bone structure), but otherwise I'm going to use social media as a way to connect, not just to preen insecurely, and not as a barometer for my own self-esteem.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to comb through my Facebook friends and do a cull of racists. And I'll unfollow the Bora Bora infinity-pool lady because, let's be honest, there's no way she's ever going to introduce me to Tom Hardy.

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Raise your hand if you have a thriving career – and a second or third job as well.

As in, 'Hi, I'm a web developer/yoga instructor/freelance writer.'

You're not alone. **Eve Barlow** explores the cultural shift known as

'slashing' and what it means for you



There's one question I can't tolerate: 'Where do you see yourself in five years?' Hang on a sec while I speed dial Mystic Meg. Any crystal ball pre-empting my 20s would have shattered at the sight of a decade during which I graduated with a law degree, worked in bars and at newspapers, faffed about at radio stations, ran a magazine, 'blogged' and managed social-media campaigns. Recently, I moved from London to Los Angeles to concentrate on freelance writing full-time. Within six months, I'm writing/ managing an artist/helping to run a record label/consulting for pop stars/birthing a script/developing a podcast. I often wonder if I'm moonlighting through life. Whenever I'm asked, 'What do you do for a living?' I think, 'Which part of "living", and how long do you have?' My father - a retired GP who worked in one surgery for 35 years - regularly asks me to move back home so I can 'work things out'. I'm going to be 29 this month. My mum was 39 when she had me. I don't know if I'll have figured out who I am in 10 years, let alone be ready to bring another individual into the world.

Thankfully, I am not alone. We are living in the age of 'slashing', which has nothing to do with Guns N' Roses and everything to do with a growing group of women in their 20s and 30s who

are opting for more than one career at a time. The term 'slash career' was first coined by author Marci Alboher in the 2000s. She described people with slash careers as those who turn the notion of moonlighting on its head. 'Moonlighting was something you did shamefully while slashing has cachet, from lawyer/chefs, to mom/screenwriters.' The phenomenon has grown into a full-blown cultural and generational shift in a world increasingly overcome with choice. So is this all a mirage, making

it harder for women to feel satisfied in their careers? Or are women becoming empowered to make their multiple passions a reality?

My friend Jen Long is a slasher based in London. She's also 29 and is music editor of a start-up ticket-purchasing app called Dice. 'I also do broadcasting, presenting, writing and A&R,' she says. 'You can do anything you put your mind to, can't you?' Jen left Radio 1 last year and identifies a lack of job security as a reason why we can't put all our eggs in one basket. 'I was 22, and I thought I'd be at the BBC for the rest of my life. In 40 years, I'd be Terry Wogan doing Eurovision,' she laughs. Following the economic crash, everything is in flux. The more strings you have to your bow, the more you increase your chances, but Jen finds not everyone gets it. 'A plumber came round to fix my sink, and was very concerned that I was unmarried and had no children. He couldn't understand how I was making ends meet. But then he told me he was also a DJ and to check him out on Facebook.'

Sowing the financial seed is one catalyst for the slasher. A lack of turnover at the top tier makes us wary of letting someone else dictate our salaries and quality of life. According to the UK's Office for National Statistics, in 2013 the gender pay gap between full-time workers *increased* to 10% and 37% of men were employed in higher roles compared with just 18% of women. Tiffany Soi is a London-based construction project manager/yoga guide/competitive rock-climber, who decided, at 28, to establish her own yoga business. 'You don't necessarily want to do the 9-5 commute

for the rest of your life,' she says of the seemingly never-ending rat race. Tiffany believes building something you're passionate about, in tandem, could allow for a full transition later down the line. Keeping the day job is key. 'Otherwise, if it falls apart, you're screwed.' Even women in the public eye, such as BBC broadcaster/touring DJ/face of her own brand (AMP) Annie Mac, recognise the importance of diversifying your wares to secure your future. 'Three-quarters of my income is from DJing,' she says. 'The BBC pays, but it also provides a platform to have other avenues. I capitalised on that because my dream is to be able to just do radio every day.'

The financial impetus affects women in professional roles, too. Alison Linas, a 28-year-old lawyer in Virginia, became a Zumba instructor 18 months ago. A dancer growing up, she went back to her roots part-time. 'I decided if I was doing Zumba several times a week I may as well get paid to do it. Having an extra source of income gives me more play money.'

Rather than climbing one ladder, women are swinging between disparate branches to achieve their goals. The Chartered Management Institute reported last year that women would have to work until they were 80 just to make up the income they'd lost in comparison with their male counterparts. Slashing is about regaining control, building our nest eggs our way.

There's much more to slashing than economics, though. The Baby Boomers were encouraged to speed narrowly down one

highway; Millennials are the first post-internet generation, educated in various pursuits (academia, sports, music). More international universities now offer multidisciplinary degrees, similar to the US approach, where a student's decision to commit to one path is delayed. And today's workers believe pursuing their aggregate passions trounces paperchasing at any cost. In Douglas Coupland's Generation X or Chuck Palahniuk's Fight Club, the protagonists whinged about their day job, professing to be different people outside of work; Millennials ask, 'Why can't we be the

same person all the time?' Jen puts it well: 'You don't stop working, but you never start working either. I don't get up in the morning and think, "Ugh, I've got to go to work." I'm like, "Right, what am I doing today? Awesome." It's just my life.'

Catherine Anne Davies, 30, is a recording artist/touring member of Simple Minds/Doctor of Literature from London. She identifies with this more deep-rooted philosophical shift, too. 'Slashing is psychological. A lot of women I know would be bored if they didn't multitask,' she says. 'Women are drawn to fulfilment.' Catherine's own juggling has provided a security blanket for if and when she decides to stop touring. 'My academia and my music are impossible to separate,' she says. Touring may have made it economically viable for her to rest on her laurels, but she continues to do both. 'You don't switch off one side of your passion because the other one is paying the bills.'

The sense of empowerment this gives the slasher is what Malfi Dorantes, 27, attributes the growing trend to in Mexico City. There, she teaches in schools part-time in addition to owning a PR company, Malfico. 'As a woman in Mexico, you used to be >

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Women would have to work

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counterparts. Slashing is

about regaining control,

building our nest eggs'



a secretary or a cook. In the past 10 years, we've started taking more risks in bigger roles. We're trying to get as much as we can by ourselves - the more roles you have, the better.'

We now live in a landscape in which we'll watch TV with an iPad in one hand and a phone in the other, so it's only natural we'd apply that same distracted behavioural pattern to our careers, right? Catherine Anne Davies is eager to emphasise that slashing isn't about flimsily pursuing a hobby, it's about seriously committing to a self-propelled venture, then mastering it.

'I think our ability for immersion has reduced,' she says. 'Your friendships are conducted superficially. Slashers have to throw themselves in whole.'

That said, one development facilitating slashing is social media and personal brand-building, where we leverage one opportunity to score another. The physical manifestation of this occurs in every Uber cab I take in LA, where drivers constantly flog their 'real' wares to me: furniture businesses, real estate, new-age beauty emporiums. On Oscars night, a driver asked me to wish him luck; he was nominated, as part of the cast of *Whiplash*.

Speaking to Alexis Krauss, one half of the US band Sleigh Bells, she says the only way she got her ethical beauty company, Beauty Lies Truth, off the ground was by launching it on Instagram and seeking comfort in an already established fanbase. 'In the past, we'd have had to do way more development to launch a business. On Instagram, we could post pictures embodying our values and engage more people than ever.'

Alexis, 30, found herself pulled in two different directions, having studied social policy then worked as an educator before finding success in a rock band. The internet's DIY culture allowed her finally to find a way of satiating both curiosities.

The only downside to having your cake and eating it? According to the American Psychological Association, millennial females are burning out much faster than before. The working seven days a week,' says Tiffany Soi. When friends tell me they stayed in bed and did nothing for a day, I don't know what that is.' Catherine, too, thinks that people rarely talk about the huge sacrifices, preferring to airbrush out the blood, sweat and tears. If you're a slasher, you don't have a choice. Your passions override any concerns you may have about the impact on your life.'

Talking to ex-Victoria's Secret model Lyndsey Scott, 30, suggests that where there's a balance to be struck, slashing allows women to be happier than ever. As an actress/coder/app developer, she's been filming in LA and writing a tutorial for iOS, having gained financial security via modelling. 'I don't feel I have to sacrifice anything because I do things I love. It doesn't feel like work.' Alexis, too, draws inspiration from busier Millennials, such as actress/businesswoman Jessica Alba and Beyoncé.

Slashing allows a generation of women more power over their futures and they'll take educated risks to make it work. I ask Jen what she says when people ask her where she'll be in five years time. 'I tell them, "I'm gonna be your boss."

With these kinds of smarts, I wouldn't be afraid of following their lead.



THE SLASHERS' GUIDE TO SUCCESS

1. BE PATIENT

Annie Mac Radio 1 Broadcaster / DJ / AMP Founder

'With Radio 1, I always had a plan. But with launching my AMP business, it grew very naturally. We took 10 years to get to the point of playing Brixton Academy shows, and I think that's right. I realised after about a year that I had a business, and a team, and this was a brand. I've never been a real business person, but I'm finding it very interesting.'

2. CONSIDER HOW YOUR JOBS CAN COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER

Lyndsey Scott Actress / Model / Coder / App Developer

I've made apps about modelling. One of the reasons I moved to LA, other than acting, was to produce a tech-related TV show, so I'm doing that as well. My main passion is acting, but all my paths have led me here. Doing all this in tandem helps to eradicate geeky connotations people have with professionals who work in the tech industry.'

3. DEFINE YOUR OWN ROLES

Jen Long Dice Music Editor / Broadcaster / Manager / A&R / Writer 'My flatmate always says, "You shouldn't apply for a job that's going, you should create the job you want, something you can do really well." At Dice, I am "the music editor", but because we're a start-up and nobody's done this before, I just define my own role. It encompasses everything – HR, writing micro copy for the app, giving talks at universities, bringing in events, doing brand and artist relations – everything. Soon, I'm going to be a boss, too, which is going to sound even sexier.'

4. USE YOUR TIME WISELY

Tiffany Soi Construction Project Manager / Strala Yoga Instructor 'Don't quit everything you do to pursue the one thing you're interested in. That's not financially viable. My job is flexible so it affords me the time out to teach or set up opportunities. I didn't have much time in a more corporate space, whereas now I can keep working on challenging projects but still leave space to build my own venture. Be realistic.'

5. THINK CREATIVELY

Alexis Krauss Musician / Founder of Beauty Lies Truth

'Once the band was established and I had time between tours, I thought about how I could re-engage with my passion for activism. I was often asked about my beauty regime and started to think about beauty in the way I thought about food and health, and how I could use my platform for others interested in that. We want to grow Beauty Lies Truth from a blog to a site where people can come to learn about the safest products and purchase them.'

6. DON'T GIVE UP AT THE FIRST HURDLE Catherine Anne Davies Musician / Academic / Author

'You rarely see the blood, sweat and tears on Instagram, only the finished product, and I think that airbrushing of the process behind reaching "success" is what people need to be more aware of before embarking upon multiple careers. It's a huge sacrifice of time and stress. You don't necessarily see all the casualties along the way and all the people who don't make it work.'

7. PLAN YOUR WEEKS METICULOUSLY Malfi Dorantes Owner of PR Agency / Teacher

'You have to be very precise with your time; plan your entire week, be very specific about which nights you go out. You shouldn't be working 9am-8pm with just one break. It won't get the best performance out of you. In my PR agency, we don't work on Fridays because I realised that Fridays are the least productive day of the week in our field. That helps me out a lot personally. Having a job where I dictate when I arrive makes more diverse things possible with my career paths.'

8. HAVING MORE THAN ONE JOB CAN HELP YOU UNWIND

Alison Linas US State Prosecutor / Zumba Instructor

'If you're the type of personality who likes to be busy, you'll get bored if you focus on only one thing. At school, I had loads of different extracurricular activities I'd be into. Why not continue that search to do multiple things once you're in the job market? Otherwise the monotony of my everyday job would be too much. The other role can act as a positive distraction.'





#Relationshipgoals

One is a fresh-faced charity do-gooder, the other is Netflix's tattooed bad girl. Together, they are **Hollywood's coolest** couple. Welcome to the world of Phoebe Dahl and Ruby Rose

Words Molly Langmuir

n a sunny afternoon, the oldest home in the Hancock Park neighbourhood of Los Angeles presents a storybook version of chaos. Two small pigs roam the lawn, prompting constant cries of distress ('Hazel, no!'), tailed by a meek but enormous dog. Dozens of mostly barefoot people rush in and out of the farmhouse-like kitchen helping with dinner or grabbing snacks.

Outside, across from a meditating buddha by a rectangular pool, is a tree with brightly coloured bras dangling from the branches (the result of a charity party game - don't ask!)

The extreme level of activity is at least partly due to a 10-person dinner party Phoebe Dahl, 26, is hosting in just a few hours. The granddaughter of one of the most wildly imaginative children's writers of the 20th century, Roald Dahl, and his first wife, Oscar-winning film star Patricia Neal, Phoebe is the founder of the charitable clothing

POWER COUPLING

Ruby Rose, 29, from Melbourne. Phoebe Dahl, 26, from Florida



Together they have more than five million Instagram followers



Ruby plays OITNB's jail heartthrob, Stella



They met last year and were engaged after three months



Phoebe is Roald Dahl's granddaughter (model Sophie is her cousin)



Ruby has more than 60 tattoos



Ruby will present The MTV Europe Music Awards 2015 with Ed Sheeran

graduated from the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising in San Francisco and then spent a year working for the Amsterdam-based line Jupe By Jackie, knew she wanted her own company to have a charitable component.

To date, the line has funded the education of 2,000 Nepali girls. Last March, Faircloth launched its first collaboration, a capsule collection sold at Urban Outfitters as part of the Urban Renewal programme, which utilises only leftover fabrics.

As the sky darkens, Phoebe and Ruby's friends begin to show up. They include Lizzie Dulien, a jewellery designer; Ruby Corley, a model (and one-time favourite subject of It Kid photographer The Cobrasnake); Nick Hinman, a model/skateboarder turned screenwriter/actor; and Katherine Moennig, the actress known for playing Shane in *The L Word* and Lena on *Ray Donovan*. Meanwhile, food is provided by Knuckle & Claw, a Silver Lake restaurant with a menu focused on lobster (flown in from the East Coast), opened earlier this year by Phoebe's younger sister Chloe and her fiancée, Nikki Booth.

Ruby and Phoebe bustle around in the kitchen, preparing grilled corn and a watermelon, olive, feta and red-onion salad, and checking on the main course: lobster pot pies irreverently formed in the shape of the crustacean. (A love of culinary arts seems to be another family trait - Phoebe's cousin is model-turned-cookbook-author Sophie Dahl.)

Out in the front yard, candle lanterns and flowers hang from the branches of an enormous tree, along with two long swings. Below all of this is a table surrounded by mismatched chairs and decorated with lush bouquets of roses arranged by local florist The Velvet Garden; the scene is completed, naturally, by a life-size wooden alligator peeking out from behind the tree's trunk.

Dinner conversation moves seamlessly from Ruby's thoughts on whether *Orange Is The New Black* has drastically changed her life (she doesn't think so) to Ruby and Phoebe's complementary star signs.

Meanwhile, inside the kitchen, Lucy chats with a few remaining friends while the pigs and dog root around for leftover food, the walls above them decorated with various depictions of pets come and gone.

Over the door that leads to the backyard, though, there is one slightly different item hanging in an unobtrusive frame: Willy Wonka's golden ticket.

line Faircloth & Supply, which puts out Japanese-inspired linen basics that are at once tomboyish and feminine – gingham jumpers, draped dresses in muted colours and loosely tailored drop-crotch trousers.

She lives nearby in hipsters' paradise Silver Lake (think LA's equivalent of east London), in a bungalow with her fiancée, Ruby Rose, 29, the tattoed Australian breakout star of the latest season of *Orange Is The New Black*, but frequently still organises get-togethers at the home where she spent much of her childhood and where her mother, Lucy, still lives.

It's easy to see why. The house is befitting of someone with the last name Dahl.
Turreted and with a shingled roof, it has a rococo mural adorning the ceiling of one room and an entire wall featuring framed prints of spiders in another. Also, according to Phoebe, it's haunted. (In spite of how substantial it looks, the house was actually built nearby and moved to its current site in 1910, pulled over by horse and buggy.)

Lucy bought the place in 1998 and it has been home to her and her family ever since. Not to mention the pets, which have included not just pigs but frogs, snakes, lizards and a parrot.

Phoebe and Ruby actually met there, at a barbecue Phoebe arranged for friends a year and a half ago. Ruby, who'd recently moved to the States to try acting after becoming a well-known DJ and model in her homeland, was invited by a mutual friend, but almost didn't show. She thought about skipping the event, and then she heard there would be a pig. 'So I came and met Hazel, and I fell in love,' Ruby says. 'And then I met Phoebe.' She laughs.

Phoebe's winningly casual approach to entertaining was immediately apparent. 'She was in sweatpants and had no make-up on,' says Ruby. 'But we fell in love at first sight.'

Three months and numerous tabloid appearances later, Ruby, who has the bone structure – and hair gel habits – of Bieber, teamed with power brows and pillowy lips, proposed.

Phoebe accepted, but they didn't have much time to celebrate. A few hours later the designer headed to Nepal, where Faircloth's charitable efforts are focused - for each item sold, a girl there receives two school uniforms, school supplies and a one-year scholarship. Even before she officially launched Faircloth, Phoebe, who

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After two years in America, **Emma Forrest** barely recognises life in the UK. She explores the Californication of London. Organic facial, anyone?

've been in London a month now, so it's a jolt to check my inbox and find emails from the US-based Bar Method. Sakara Life food delivery and Pressed Juicery - I picture little juice combos typing with their coriander/watermelon hands that they miss waiting for me on my doorstep, where they watch the perfect sunsets and will away the coyotes. Don't I miss their immune-boosting deliciousness, they cry? Of course, my pint-size darlings! It's just that, for the first time, I've found everything I need right here.

I've become very comfortable with my world in Los Angeles over the past eight years, because it is very comfortable. I've spread out my work and my feelings, maybe because I have so much more living space than I could ever afford back home, and it has made my whole life

feel more generous. But who knew that the pleasures I've come to associate most closely with California - health and wellness, skincare, great exercise - had taken such firm root here in England amongst the tube strikes and foraging foxes?

In my few weeks here, I have already come to rely on Oskia's organic skincare, the Pure Package meal delivery and Barrecore.

This week I discovered Malvina Fraser, the anti-ageing whizz at KX Spa in Chelsea, who has lasers to beat any LA dermatologist, plus that key ingredient Angelenos tend to lack: wicked humour. It helps with any discomfort, epidermal and beyond. I think British humour developed Darwinian-style, now it's been scientifically proven that there is not enough sunlight to provide Brits with the recommended dose of vitamin D, aka the happiness drug.

At Frame in Shoreditch, the workouts are as much about having a laugh as about having a great bottom. I don't think that could take hold in quite the same way back in LA. Over the summer, I did pop-up yoga in the greenhouse of Ravenscourt Park, west London (naturally heated hatha!). Lying in Savasana, watching through the glass as the trees sway overhead, there was a melancholy to the loveliness of the season - this can't and won't last, summer was fleeting, like a lover pulling out all the stops for a one-night stand - and that is the flipside to our wicked humour. I see it in the work of Grayson Perry, Simone Rocha and Florence Welch. That ability to tap the funnysad makes me feel connected here, where I once felt such

Now I'm a prodigal daughter, loose-limbed and lovestruck for the sofas at the Electric Cinema in Notting Hill. And a few doors from there, I still can't believe that Lutyens & Rubinstein, my book agents, have so successfully opened one of the best bookstores in London (with an espresso machine in the basement, no less).

The NHS still makes me crazy proud (and relieved not to have to navigate the US health system for my medication each month. I loved my GP and the local pharmacist, a

'The ability to tap

the funny-sad

makes me feel

connected here'

change from trying to explain to the robot keeping you on hold how badly you need your psych meds to arrive). Then there's the soothing pleasure of a solo ride on a London bus. And the more complicated pleasure of watching my husband admonish a loud mobile user on the top deck and, despite it devolving into a slanging match, no one drew a gun.

What else has stood out about being back in a town I fled? Stratford's Westfield is not only the one truly beautiful shopping centre I know of, but is also a living microcosm of our multiculturalism working (in LA, Filipinotown is separate from Little Tokyo and never the twain shall meet).

How happy do I feel right now in London? Last week, I took the Eurostar to see a friend in Paris and it was one of those magical trips where things just fall into place. We had a dreamy dinner at Hôtel Costes and ended up sitting on the roof of the Paris Opera House, watching fireworks. London had put me in such a good place, it's like it granted me that permission to flirt with another (city), that you only have when things are really solid in your relationship.

an outsider, I had to run away to America.

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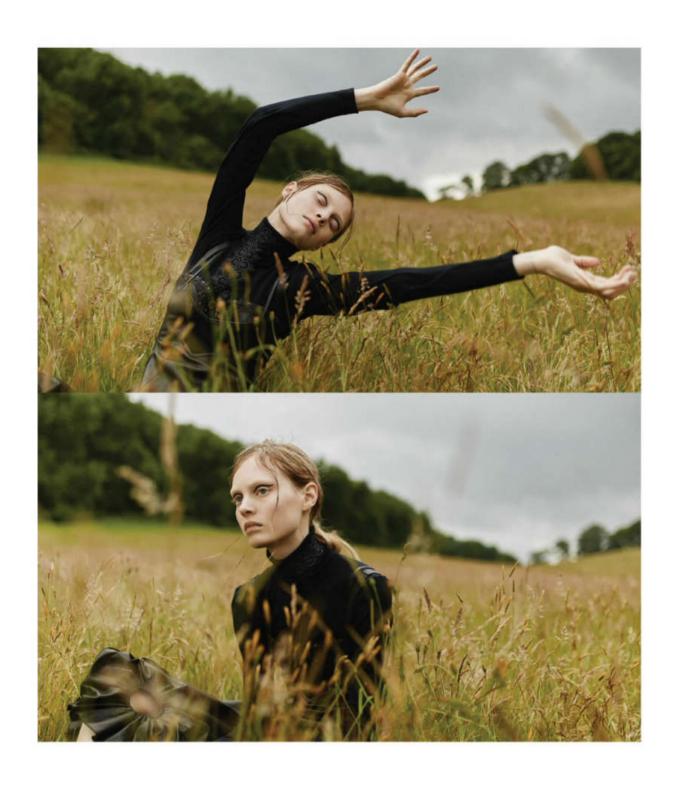


















Kai Z Feng 251



This page Silk-mix jacket, f1,830, matching trousers, f1,070, silk-satin shirt, f1,130, and leather sandals, f380, all Gucci. Wool-mix socks (worn throughout), f35, Maria La Rosa
Opposite Embellished silk-crepe top, f1,710, and matching skirt, f2,240, both Dolce & Gabbana







This page Silk dress, f1,710, Fendi. Satin sandals, £420, Sophia Webster. Cotton socks, f3.50, Calzedonia. Rings (L-R): Silver, green quartz and gold, f550, Tessa Metcalfe; topaz and gold, f790, and sapphire and gold, £890, both Anabela Chan Opposite Wool black jacket, £580, and matching trousers, f159, both Hugo Boss. Black silk scarf, £160, Rockins









This page Silk-jacquard coat, £2,595, Burberry. Leather sandals, £395, Terry de Havilland.

Opposite Silk dress, £2,800, Christian Dior. Leather and velvet sandals, £635, Mary Katrantzou. Swarovski crystal brooch (bottom), £148, and Swarovski crystal and metal brooch (top), £78, both Butler & Wilson



This page White cotton waistcoat (with vest), £980, and silk-mix trousers, £670, both Giorgio Armani. Cream silk scarf, £255, Brooks Brothers. Leather sandals, £540, Giuseppe Zanotti Opposite Wool blazer, £1,645, cotton shirt, £735, and wool trousers, £590, all Michael Kors Collection. Leather boots, £625, Camilla Elphick. For shopping details, see Address Book. Hair: Lyndell Mansfield at CLM Hair & Make Up using Urban Decay. Make-up: Mel Arter at CLM Hair & Make Up using Pureology. Manicure: Adam Slee at Streeters using Rimmel London. Model: Doug at Premier. With thanks to: Spring Studios **Hordur Ingason**









Sequin top, £115, and matching trousers, £130, both French Connection. Leather sandals, £59.99, H&M. Beaded scarf, £12, Topshop















1. Sequin top, £45, Dorothy Perkins. Embellished denim jeans, £175, Michael Michael Kors. Leather boots, £29.99, New Look. 2. Sequined jersey dress, £655, Preen Line. Velvet boots, £199, Hobbs. 3. All clothing, as before





1. Velvet shoes, £45, Asos. Lurex socks, £3.50, Topshop. 2. Leather shoes, £80, Aldo. 3. Faux-leather sandals, £75, Miss KG. 4. Glitter-embellished faux-leather shoes, £35, Oasis. 5. Velvet shoes, £120, Carvela. 6. Leather shoes, £89, Dune. 7. Glitter-embellished leather boots, £225, Russell & Bromley























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HOW TO... DO COLOUR

- 1. Use Maybelline New York Eye Studio Color Tattoo in Metallic Pomegranate (a), £4.99, on top lids from lash line to socket, then buff into skin with a clean brush. Pat Bobbi Brown's Intense Pigment Liner in Midnight (b), £26.50, over the top to set, and follow with mascara.
- 2. For the most precise finish, line lips with Rimmel London Exaggerate Full Colour Lip Liner in Under My Spell (c), £3.99, fill in, then apply Kiko Intensively Lavish Lipstick in Melodious Wine (d), £6.90, over the top using a brush, starting from your Cupid's bow. Blot, repeat.
- 3. Apply highlighter to cheekbones before buffing Mac Powder Blush in Frankly Scarlet (e), £18.50, over the top. Finish off the look with nail varnish: two coats of Chanel Le Vernis in Rouge Noir (f), £18.



Gorouge
There is a place where classic, sexy red meets a chic, flattering all-over alternative, and it is called Burgundy. The hottest colour of the season is just as good on the lids (trust us) as the cheeks, nails and lips. It's the secret to a sophisticated edge, and it will look wonderful on you.





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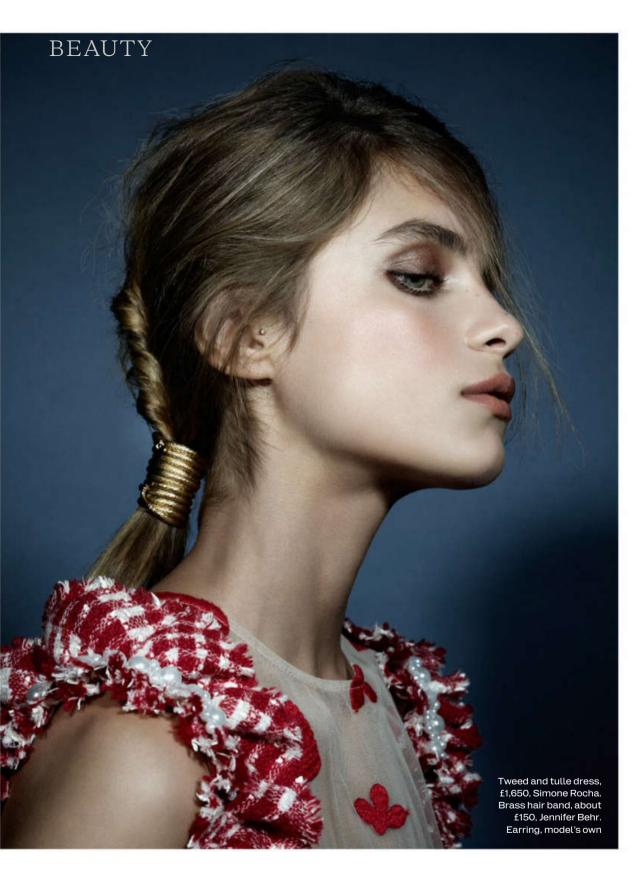


HOW TO... **GROW UP** YOUR MAKE-UP

- 1. Buff a mineral-based foundation into your skin for a soft matte finish with a subtle glow. Suck in cheeks and swap bronzer just under the cheekbones.
- 2. Apply a layer of reflective eyeshadow, like Dior's Christmas Collection State of Gold Diorshow Fusion Mono Eyeshadow in Blazing (a), £25, over your whole eyelid, then pull it taut and draw along the top lash line using bareMinerals Lasting Line Long-Wearing Eyeliner in Nonstop Navy (b), £15. Angle your line straight up to the end of your brow, then draw a line back to the inner corner so you have a hollow triangle. Fill in, then finish by patting Mac Into The Well Eyeshadow in Switch Me On (c), £16, on top.
- 3. Finish by colouring in lips with Mac Lip Pencil in In Synch (d), £12.50, layering Clinique Chubby Stick Cheek Colour Balm in Roly Poly Rosy, £19 (e), over the top.



Look polished
Add these words to your repertoire: elegant, beautiful, sexy and pretty. You can be all these things at once simply by giving a bit more attention to detail than you might normally. The pay-off is worth the extra investment: velvety and matte skin; full, sophisticated lips; and elongated eyes, precisely lined in navy. All at once. Go!>



All tied up
So here's the thing, ladylike hair does not mean what it used to. There is no chignon, no sculpted 'do frozen in time with a full can of mousse. No, the modern ladylike look has an undone feel that softens the whole thing. Think sleek texture and a 1950s influence, but with soft ends and a younger twist. Accessories are imperative, and also much more fun.

HOW TO... DO THE HAIR

- 1. Start with a tousled texture by rough drying Aveda Light Elements Texturizing Creme, £21, through the hair, combing with your fingers and pointing the nozzle down the hair shaft at all times.
- 2. Gather hair into a low, loose ponytail, then twist sideways into a tight chignon, leaving the ends free. Tie and pin the twist in place with Boots Essential Kirby Grips, £1.39 for 30.
- 3. Apply your accessory at the nape of your neck to hide the ponytail elastic and add the finishing ladylike touch. Pull a few strands loose at the front for a modern finish.

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Compiled by Natalie Lukaitis

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LOCATION

NYC

MOTIVATION MANTRA

Mind right, body tight!

WHAT'S IN YOUR FRIDGE?

The weirdest thing is...

Water kefir. It's a fermented drink that you add to water. It boosts immunity and improves our brain functions.

My ultimate superfood is...

Chlorella. I use it to supercharge my smoothies. It protects against pollutants and is anti-inflammatory.

The tastiest thing in there is...

Pancake mix!

#MYDAYONAPLATE



Breakfast

This is a great combo of probiotics, which help your digestion, and good fats, which help keep your levels of cholesterol (a fat-like substance we produce to digest food) in check.



Lunch

This light lunch is still high in fibre, so it will stop cravings for sugary things and you'll feel satisfied for longer.

Snack

Body Reset diet smoothie from Harley Pasternak (see below). His book is amazing.



Dinner

Cauliflower 'rice' is a great carb-free alternative. Mix in veggies and sesame oil and you've got a great meal full of vitamins. Your body turns carbohydrates into 'fuel', but any surplus is stored as sugar.

Harley Pasternak's Body Reset diet smoothie

5 raw almonds

1 red apple, peeled and chopped 1 small banana

34 cup fat-free yoghurt 1/2 cup almond milk

¹∕2tsp ground cinnamon

Combine in a blender and pulse until smooth.

283



EMILY SKYF

6 EMILYSKYEFIT

FOLLOWERS

lm

AGE

DAY JOB

Fitness expert

LOCATION

GOLD COAST, AUSTRALIA

MOTIVATION MANTRA

Aim to do your best, not someone else's best

WHAT'S IN YOUR FRIDGE?

The weirdest thing is...

Kombucha tea. It's a fermented drink. There are claims it aids digestion and immunity. It's my go-to when I'm feeling bloated.

You won't find...

Normal milk. I don't react well to dairy, so I have coconut milk.

I always have to

restock... Salmon and berries. Leat berries every day and salmon four times a week.'

Cacao and coconut protein balls

250g almonds

250g dessicated coconut. plus a little extra for coating 12 medjool dates, pitted 75g whey protein powder

75g raw cacao powder

- 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- 1. Blend almonds and coconut; add dates, protein, cacao and oil.
- 2. Refrigerate for an hour.
- 3. Dust a plate with a thin layer of coconut; form the mixture into balls and roll in the coconut to coat.

#MYDAYONAPI ATF



Breakfast

Chia seeds are considered a high-quality protein that helps rebuild tissue after a workout.



Lunch

Salmon isn't just a great way to get your recommended protein intake, it also contains multiple B vitamins, which can help convert food into fuel.

Snack

Cacao and coconut protein balls. These satisfy my sweet tooth, without being too bad for my body.



Dinner

Spinach and mushroom frittata.



NIKKI

@STAYSHARPBESTRONG

FOLLOWERS

320k

AGE

DAY JOB

Model and wellness expert

LOCATION



MOTIVATION MANTRA

Inhale love, exhale hate

Falafel

400g can of chickpeas 2 tablespoons tahini Juice of 1 lemon 3 cups of spinach 2 cups of oat flour 1 teaspoon oregano ½ teaspoon turmeric Dash of cayenne, to taste Salt & pepper, to taste 3 tbsp olive or grapeseed oil

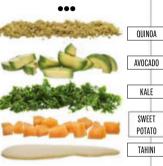
- 1. Drain and rinse the chickpeas.
- 2. Blend all ingredients except oil; shape into 8-12 round patties.
- 3. Fry the patties in oil, 3 minutes on each side.

#MYDAYONAPI ATE



Breakfast

Eggs provide protein while black beans and vegetables give energy, filling you up without you feeling heavy.



Lunch

Sweet potato is rich in vitamins A and C, provides high levels of antioxidants and helps to regulate blood sugar.



AVOCADO LIME JUICE

KALE

OUINOA

KALE

SWEET POTATO

TAHINI

PINEAPPLE

TURMERIC

Snack

Blend all these ingredients to make my 'glowing skin smoothie' - you get vitamin C from the lime and anti-inflammatory properties from the turmeric.



CARROTS

Dinner

Chickpeas regulate blood sugar to help with weight management and are also high in (vegan) protein



KAYLA ITSINES

6 @KAYLA ITSINES

FOLLOWERS

3.6 m

DAY JOB

Qualified personal trainer

LOCATION

ADELAIDE

MOTIVATION MANTRA

The secret is, there is no secret!

WHAT'S IN YOUR FRIDGE?

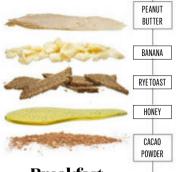
My ultimate superfood

is... Greek yoghurt. I try to incorporate it into my diet regularly it's good bacteria that helps to improve digestive health, and is a great form of protein.

The tastiest thing in there is...

Occasionally tiramisu. It's my reward.

#MYDAYONAPI ATF



Breakfast

This is a great combo of fibre, protein, potassium and flavonoids, which keep you feeling full for longer and help your body to function at its best.



Oats are complex carbohydrates, which release energy slowly.



CARROTS

VERMICELLI

YOGHURT

MINT

CHICKEN

Lunch

Warm Vietnamese chicken salad. Salads with a combination of protein and healthy carbohydrates are a go-to for me for lunch. They help replenish any lost fuel from the morning, without making you feel too full afterwards.

Snack

Vegetable sticks with minted voahurt. Not only does this taste great, mint helps soothe your digestive tract and eliminates toxins.

Dinner

Warm Niçoise salad with salmon, which is an excellent source of vitamin D, essential for your bones, and omega-3 fatty acids, essential for your joints.



Warm Niçoise salad with salmon

½ wholemeal wrap, cut into triangles 115g salmon fillet

1 egg

½ medium sweet potato, peeled, cut into 3cm cubes 6 green beans, cut in half

½ cup green lettuce leaves 100g cherry tomatoes, halved

1/4 red onion, sliced 5 olives, pitted and halved 4 basil leaves

Lemon juice (to taste)

- 1. Bake the wrap for 5-10 minutes at 200°C/390°F. Set aside to cool.
- 2. Season salmon and bake for 10-15 minutes.
- 3. Boil egg for 5-6 minutes.
- 4. Leave egg to cool, then crack, peel and quarter it.
- 5. Steam sweet potato and green beans until tender.
- 6. In a bowl, combine all the ingredients except egg, salmon and triangles.
 - 7. Place salad on plate, add triangles and egg and top with salmon.

8. Lightly season and drizzle with extra lemon juice.

@THEBODYCOACH



@HANNAHBRONFMAN



Kick-start a healthier lifestyle with our fitness and diet tip at elleuk.com/tags/ellefit

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@ @STAYSHARPBESTRONG



@EMILYSKYEFIT



285 **ELLEUK.COM**

JOE WICKS



FOLLOWERS

445k

AGE

30

DAY JOB

Nutrition coach

LOCATION

SURBITON

MOTIVATION MANTRA

Prep like a boss

WHAT'S IN YOUR FRIDGE?

My shelves are mostly packed with...

Spinach, kale and 'midget trees' (broccolini).

I always have to

restock... Eggs. I go through a lot of protein each week.

You won't find...

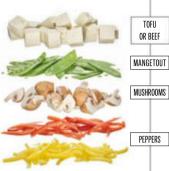
Energy drinks in there. You crash so hard afterwards. I'd rather smash a HIIT session to get my endorphins going.

#MYDAYONAPLATE



Breakfast

Protein refuel pancakes. They sound naughty, but because the base is made from whey protein and Greek yoghurt, they're actually really filling and good for you.



Lunch

Stir fry. Peppers are great antioxidants and mangetout contains 128% of your daily vitamin C requirement per cup.



Snack

Almonds are high in calcium and vitamin E, which helps to improve the condition and appearance of your skin.



Dinner

Thai green chicken curry.
If I work out in the afternoon,
I refuel with this dish. It's a great
source of protein. Star anise
also has antibacterial
properties, warding off illness.

Protein pancakes

1 banana

1 egg

1 scoop whey protein 1 tsp coconut oil

Handful of berries

2 tbsp Greekyoghurt Squeeze of honey

- 1. Blend banana, egg and protein to make batter.
- 2. Heat oil; cook pancakes 1 minute each side.
 - 3. Serve with berries, yoghurt and honey.

Made to order

The fitness bloggers' treats, cheats and takeaways

Hannah Bronfman

When I eat out I... Love finding trendy new restaurants with a healthy twist. Santina, Cafe Clover and Darrow's in New York are favourites. I order... Veggies and protein. Instead of drinking soda, I go for sparkling water. I also try not to order pasta, even if it's gluten-free. For dessert I get... Cheesecake, but it's rare that I get dessert instead of tea at the end of a meal. My favourite takeaway is... Indian because it's something I don't really make for myself. I order... Okra and chicken in a curry sauce, but I skip the naan.

Nikki Sharp

When I eat out I... Go to Café Gratitude in LA. I order... The macrobiotic bowl. At other restaurants I'll opt for salads, omelettes with loads of veggies, or tapas to share.

For dessert I get... Anything chocolate! I cook a lot, so when I go out, it's a treat for me.

My favourite takeaway is: Mediterranean. I love a meal where you can order a bunch of small dishes to share.

I order... Things such as hummus, tabbouleh, falafels, Greek salad.

Kayla Itsines

When I eat out I... Go to an Italian restaurant called Parisi's in Adelaide.

I order... Chicken special with roast potatoes and vegetables or spaghetti marinara.

My favourite takeaway is... Thai.

I order... Chicken and vegetable green curry with brown rice.

Joe Wicks

When I eat out I... Go to Nando's. I love a cheeky burger every now and then.

For dessert I get... Chocolate fondant, if it's on offer. I cook a lot, so if I go out, I get everything. My favourite takeaway is... Mexican. You can get healthy-ish burritos.

Emily Skye

When I go out I... Go to Guzman Y Gomez — it's Australia's Chipotle. I get a barramundi salad with extra barra and guacamole — it's so filling and yummy.

For dessert I get... Vanilla ice-cream dipped in melted chocolate with nuts and strawberries. I get it from Max Brenner, an Australian chocolate dessert restaurant.

My favourite takeaway is... Chinese. It's very rare that I get takeaway, so if I do, I go all out. I order... Brown rice with chicken and coconut curry sauce, with chilli-and-garlic crisps on top. It's delicious!

Prescription skincare without the prescription



Cetraben

A unique formula that's helped millions manage their dry and eczema-prone skin, proving so popular that 96% of people would recommend it to a friend¹. And now it's available without prescription from major retailers as well as pharmacies. So you can easily get the same high quality care for your skin, without a visit to the doctors.

www.cetraben.co.uk

As close to your skin as you are.



Always read the label

ABSOLUTELY FLAWLESS

A beautiful white smile isn't just the must-have accessory to accompany your seasonal look. With **Pearl Drops** Lasting Flawless White Toothpolish you can shine all year round

hristmas may be the season of tinsel and office parties, but that's no excuse to let your style standards slip. Fairytale fashion filled the a/w 2015 catwalks and the fantastical look has filtered down to the high street. What better year, then, to throw away those festive jumpers (no amount of irony justifies wearing a light-up Rudolph nose), and embrace the icy-white spirit of The Snow Queen instead?

This is a look that inspires pristine adornment: lavishly textured faux-furs, crystal embellishment and lots of white. Work it top-to-toe in layers and build your palette in shades that run from the softest, warmest ivory through to the purest, snowy white. Then accessorise it with the one thing that transcends every season and every passing

trend: a great-looking smile.

Pearl Drops Lasting Flawless White Toothpolish





white, beautiful smile. Yet another innovation from Pearl Drops, whitening experts for over 40 years.

After just five days' use, teeth are visibly whiter, and after 14 days Pearl Drops Lasting Flawless White has been clinically shown to remove 100% more surface stains than a regular toothpaste*. At the same time, its patented mineral complex smoothes imperfections. The result? A beautiful smile that will last you all the way through Christmas and far beyond.

> **SHOP IT** Buy from Boots and Superdrug, in-store and online, rrp £6.99, Find out more at pearldrops.co.uk

shine to create aflawlessly white smile'







Clockwise, from top: Steven Klein for Nars An Abnormal Female Lip Pencil Coffret, £45; Chanel Sign'e Particuliere Creation Exclusive Eye Palette, £44; Dior Vernis in State of Gold, £20.50; Tom Ford Lips & Boys Mini Lipsticks in Joaquin, Ansel and Rocco, £27 each; Burberry My Burberry Eau de Parfum Festive Edition, £65 for 50ml

Jingle belles

The best beauty gifts under£20



PLAYFUL POLISH

Smith & Cult Nail Lacquer in Feed The Rich (teal green), Kings & Thieves (dark blue) and Shattered Souls (gold) are on the right side of 'festive', £19 each.

For more new-season go to elleuk.com/beauty



SCRUB IN STYLE

In lieu of bathing in champagne (which frankly sounds quite sticky), soak with Molton Brown's cleansing Champagne And Elderflower Festive Bauble, £11.



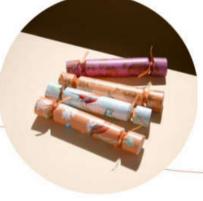
LUSH LIP SERVICE

Paul & Joe Lip Treatment Balm is available in two flavours (ginger and honey, and Earl Grey tea), £14 each, and feels as lovely as it looks.



A SUITS-ALL SHADE

The marbled bullet means this is like a lip-colour guessing game. Anna Sui Lipstick (part of Holiday Snow Collection), £20.



ALTERNATIVE XMAS CRACKERS

Who knows what's inside - the packaging is so good, who cares? Sanctuary Spa Surprises, £14.



A SEASONAL SPRITZ

Single-note scents that could not be more evocative. The Library of Fragrance Cologne in Frankincense and Mistletoe, £15 each for 30ml.



@@ELLESOPHIE

FOR PARTY EYES

What could be better than the original? A crystallised one, of course. Benefit They're Real! Mascara Limited Edition, £19.50.





Fifteen years after the launch of its original Flower fragrance, Kenzo returns with a new. sweeter, muskier version. Basically, **Flower** by Kenzo L'Elixir EDP,£66 for 50ml,

is like praline, only

not as ingestible.

GET THE GLOW

Yes, you can look radiant in winter...



Stimulate your skin with Decléor Intense Glow Mask, f12 each, Antiinflammatory essential oils, such as jasmine absolute, have been suspended in water, helping them sink in faster.



Mix Bobbi Brown Limited Edition Sterling Nights Face Highlighter, £26, with your moisturiser. It contains light-reflective pearls to give your skin a subtle sheen.



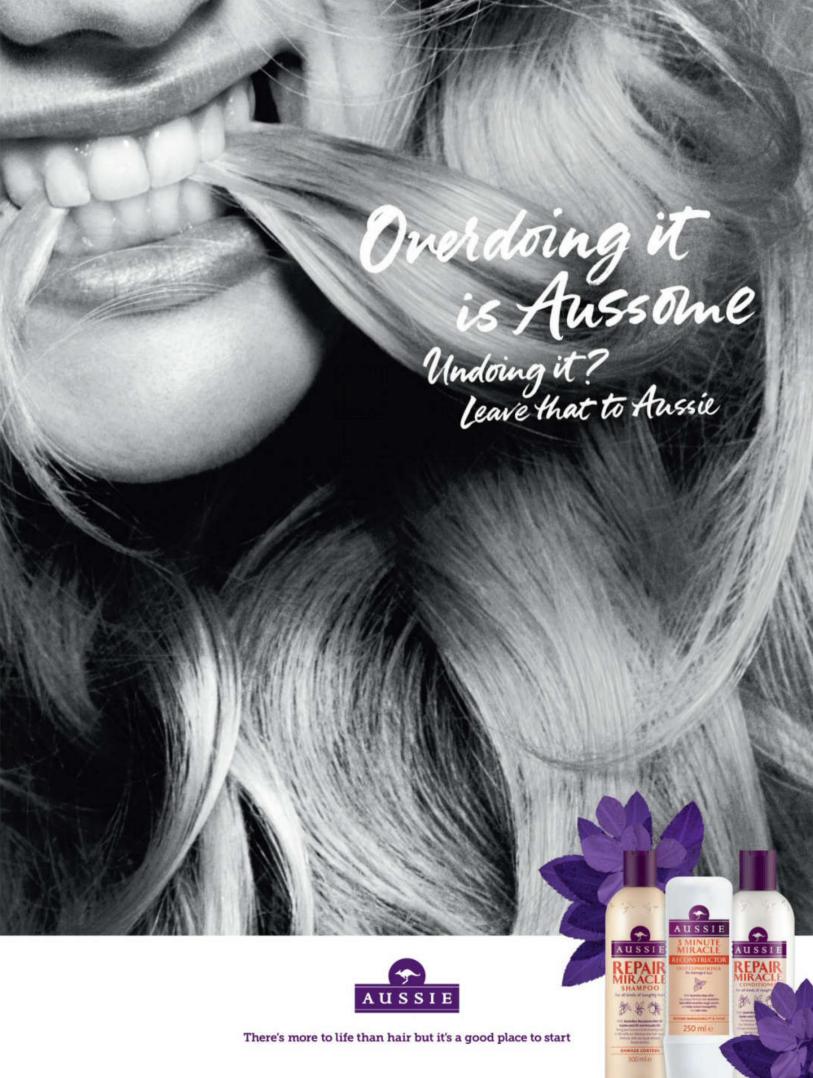
THE POWER BROW

Move over, Cara – there are some new 'wow' brows in town. Now it's all about Neelam Gill, aka the British model of the moment with the most perfectly thick and sculpted eyebrows. This kit contains all of her essentials in handbag-friendly miniatures. We're getting it. bbrõwbar Neelam's Brow Kit, £35

BACK TO YOUR ROOTS

Following the runaway success of his Blending Wands, Josh Wood is adding to his collection with the new Root Concealer, £12.50, a genius spray that instantly blurs and blends roots, plus adds volume. This is the next best thing to visiting the man himself in his new Soho Farmhouse atelier.







Shampoo

Toni & Guy Cleanse Shampoo For Advanced Detox, £6.49



Conditioner

L'Occitane Revitalising Fresh Conditioner, £17



Masque

Aussie 3 Minute Miracle Shine Deep Treatment, £4.99



Serum

L'Oréal Professionnel Lumino Contrast Taming Gloss Serum, £14.99



Protectant

Schwarzkopf Essence Ultîme Crystal Shine Heat Protection, £5.49



Hairdryer ghd Aura Hairdryer,

BrushCloud Nine Dressing
Brush, £20



Oil

Vo5 Miracle Concentrate Elixir with Argan Oil, £5.19

Finishing Spray

Oribe Shine Light Reflecting Spray, £37

The directions

Wash your hair with a purifying shampoo and conditioner. One of the biggest culprits of dull hair is excess build-up of products and residue, so you'll need to give it a deep clean.

Run a shine treatment through your hair and leave it to sink in for at least three minutes. It will help to repair your hair and seal the cuticles, giving it a smooth surface that will reflect more light.

Rinse the treatment out using lukewarm water. Avoid hot water as it can strip your hair of its natural oils.

4 Towel-dry hair so it's still a bit damp, then apply a serum. Our top tip? Part your hair into two sections - top and bottom - and apply half the serum to each section. This will prevent product build-up and allow for an even application.

⁵ **Spray** from the roots to the tips with heat-protection spray. This will provide

an invisible barrier to stop hair from getting damaged and going frizzy.

6 Hold the hairdryer at least 8in away to avoid heat damage, blow dry your hair, then give it a final blast with a cold shot. Cool hair has more elasticity, so it won't break as easily when you brush.

T Smooth out your style with a natural bristled brush. The structure of boar bristles aids the distribution of natural oils from your scalp towards the end of the hair shaft, making it ultra-shiny.

3 Add oil to the ends where natural oils don't reach. Look for a formula containing argan oil, which will work on two levels: first sealing and smoothing your hair, and second restoring moisture.

⁹ **Mist** your hair all over with a shine spray. If there are any sections that need a more controlled application, spray product onto a brush, then work it through that area.

Substitutions and additions ==swap +=add

DULL HAIR

+ ADD Contrast. Hair that's both light and dark looks shinier because it's not a flat field of one shade.

+ ADD An Olaplex treatment, £35, from Taylor Taylor London. It'll maintain your hair health even after colouring. **CURLY HAIR**

+ ADD Wrap your hair around curling tongs. The heat will defrizz and add shine.

SWAP Instead of a glossing serum, use John Frieda Frizz Ease Forever Smooth Anti-Frizz Primer, £7, to prep your curls. STYLED HAIR

+ ADD Vitamins: Philip
Kinglsey's PK4 Hair Dietary
Supplements, £25, are
enriched with soya protein
for strength, shine and body.

SWAP Run oils through your

......

SWAP Run oils through your hair before you shampoo, so you don't weigh it down after.

READ IT For more beauty and haircare, go to elleuk.com/beauty



Keep it down.

There's an Aussie girl nearby who's been

burning both ends of several candles.

You'll easily spot her. A bit sleep deprived.

But with hair that's wide-awake

and as fresh as a field of well-rested daisies.

How's that even possible? Aussie's

Repair Miracle collection, that's how.

Even if you've been up

to the unmentionable (we won't ask),

these **hair-rehab** miracles,

will sort out your do in no time.

So go on. Find Your Aussome.

It's what all the best

Aussie girls do.

#FindYour Aussome





Want to give your nails a little extra oomph this party season? It's easy with the brilliant new **Revlon** Shine Addict Nail Buffer

The strong brow

Nothing frames a natural make-up look better than a pair of perfectly groomed eyebrows





au natural style





The finishing touch If you're playing it sleek and natural, don't let your nails bring you down

Great style doesn't stop at your clothes: to really get it right you have to consider every aspect of your look, right down to your nails. Yes, we all love a bit of polish. But for truly long-lasting style that taps into the season's trend for sleek classics elevated to a whole new level, there's a brand-new kid on the nail block: the Revlon Shine Addict Nail Buffer. Its unique micro-grain roller surface will buff each one of your nails in just two seconds flat for super-high shine that lasts. No more chipping, no more smudging, just brilliant high shine every time.

ENJOY A PERFECT POLISH!

Yours in just two quick and easy steps..

How it works Getting nails that shine, all the time, is a simple two-step process. Buff with the green roller once a fortnight, then polish with the white roller any time you want to enhance your shine.







SHOP IT Get the Revlon Shine Addict Nail Buffer at Superdrug and amazon.co.uk



ColorStay Gel Envy Longwear Nail Enamel, f6.99, **Revlon**





Prep makes perfect As with all make-up looks, your first focus should be on proper skincare. Cleanse, exfoliate and moisturise before you prime. Leave your moisturiser to sink in for at least 10 minutes, then apply an oil-absorbing primer, such as Max Factor Face Finity All Day Primer, £10.99. **All about that base** I apply foundation like I would a moisturiser - liberally, using my fingertips. This warms up the product to help it settle into your skin in a natural way, instead of sitting on the surface like it can when you use a brush. **5 Get a hold** Swipe a layer of concealer over your eyelids and lips as a base. This will hold make-up in place and show the true colour of the metallic you're using. [ELLE loves Urban Decay Naked Skin Weightless Complete Coverage Concealer, £17.50.] 4 GO easy on the eyes If you want to try metallic but you're worried about it looking too dramatic, go for a universally flattering colour such as silver. Max Factor Masterpiece Colour Precision Eyeshadow in Stardust, £6.99, applies like a wet eyeshadow for ease and then dries like a powder. Build up layers until you get the intensity you want. **5 Brighten up** Use a thin eyeliner brush to dust a reflective eyeshadow along your lower lash line. This will give the effect of brighter and wider eyes. [ELLE loves YSL Couture Mono in No 12



HOW TO DO...

/IETALLIC MAKE-UP

Max Factor Global Creative Director Pat McGrath's guide to perfecting metallic make-up (without turning into a disco ball)

Fastes, £23.50.] **Clean up any excess** Dip a cotton bud in eye make-up remover and wipe over any areas where shimmer has fallen. Then lightly dab foundation over the same area, drumming with your fingers until the product has blended with your existing make-up. **Texture matters** It's best to use liquid eyeliner with metallic make-up. because it glides over roughly textured products more easily than pencil. [ELLE loves Clinique Pretty Easy Liquid



- Eyelining Pen, £19.] **S Give it lip** Swipe your lips with your favourite

lipstick, then dust metallic gold eyeshadow on top [try Shu Uemura Pressed Eye Shadow in Gold,

£11]. Less is more, so build up gradually. Dab a bit of clear gloss in the centre to make your lips appear



For more must-try new make-up looks, go to

elleuk.com/beauty

fuller. Take it off Use a gentle oil-based eye make-up remover [such as Estée Lauder Take It Away Gentle Eye and Lip LongWear Makeup Remover, £20] to detach highly pigmented products. Be careful not to rub your eyes or lips aggressively. The most gentle, effective approach is to saturate a cotton pad with make-up remover, allow the cotton pad to sit over your eyes or lips for a while, then gently wipe off the product using small circular motions.



A light less ordinary

Stylish candles from under-the-radar brands will bring a flicker of chic to your home this winter



ASTIER DE VILLATTE

VILLA MÉDICIS CERAMIC CANDLE, f120

You want it because:

Your friends will consider you well travelled and a collector of very fine things. Aesthetic: A rustic French heritage brand. Burn it: Only when you're expecting guests. Fashion match: The considered but chic Chanel type. liberty.co.uk

CIRE TRUDON

GABRIEL, £70

You want it because:

You've heard great things already - this is an insider's not-so-secret favourite - and you love a limited edition. Aesthetic: Somewhat Napoleonic; uniquely shaped, heavy, deepjewel-toned glass. Burn it: To create atmosphere while you read your favourite book. Fashion match: The super-cool, somewhat quirky Miu Miu type. net-a-porter.com

IIUVO

WOODGRAIN, £45

You want it because:

It's a new venture from Comme Des Garçons and Dover Street Market alumni, and you like to be ahead of the curve. Aesthetic: Swedish. Clean, bold, lovely. Burn it: In the kitchen while you cook. Fashion match: The straight-to-the-point, Victoria Beckham type. doverstreetmarket.com

Discover our favourite winter candles - and more new products-at elleuk.com/beauty

ELLEUK.COM

Fashion match: The

roullierwhite.com

bare-faced, normcore,

Stella McCartney type.

299

Glowing skin is crucial to fight the effects of lack of sleep in the party season. Simple helps you keep skin looking festive fresh

BRING ON

The festive season is here. Don't let late nights play havoc with your skincare. According to blogger Zoe Newlove the answer's **Simple**



ZOE'S TIP

'Mascara is always tricky to budge. I soak a cotton pad with Simple Kind To Skin Micellar Water and hold it over the eve for a few seconds before gently wiping away.'



Lack of sleep skin ageing and increase

can accelerate skin sensitivity'

> PHILIPPA LOWE. DERMATOLOGIST

logger Zoe Newlove calls herself 'an eight-hours-sleep kinda girl', but at this time of year, such luxury goes out of the window. 'During the festive season my schedule gets ramped up and I am even busier than usual. I will be lucky to grab five hours,' she says with a laugh.

When it comes to your skin, however, lack of sleep is no laughing matter. 'The skin barrier repairs itself more effectively at night,' says Simple Skincare dermatologist Dr Philippa Lowe. 'Lack of sleep ultimately leads to a weaker skin barrier. This can result in accelerated skin ageing and increased skin sensitivity.'

While Lowe recommends a good night's beauty sleep as 'the ultimate cure', she advocates a great skincare regime, too. 'No matter how tired you feel spare two minutes to sweep a cotton pad soaked with Simple Kind To Skin Micellar Cleansing Water over your face to cleanse and rehydrate your skin, and use a good night repair cream such as Simple Kind to Skin Vital Vitamin Night Cream,' she advises.

For Zoe, it's all about making your skincare routine as effective and easy as possible. 'I know if I use Simple Kind to Skin Cleansing Wipes after a late night, my skin will be cleansed and instantly hydrated.'



Give your skin a festive refresh with the new Limited Edition Simple Kind To Skin Cleansing Facial Wipes, £3.29* (available exclusively at Tesco), and Micellar Cleansing Water, £3.99*

TRY IT Discover your perfect skincare regime and learn how to get naturally healthy and good-looking skin by taking a short quiz at simpleskinadvice.com

PROTECT AND PREVENT

my La Roche-Posay

I can't live without

Comfort Nutritive

Oil, £19. It sinks in

quickly and makes

FAKE #IWOKEUPLIKETHIS I love Bobbi Brown Intensive Skin Serum Foundation, £39. It moisturises and

evens out skin tone

and contains SPF40.

It's everything I need

in one bottle.

my skin feel soft.

Anthelios XL



Kate Upton

Kate, 23, shot to fame in 2011 when a video of her doing 'the Dougie' broke the internet. Here, the actress and model shares her beauty secrets



CAPTURE PEOPLE'S ATTENTION

I always spray Jo Malone London Orange Blossom Cologne, £85, before leaving home. It's light and fresh, but it lingers.

LOOK AFTER YOUR SKIN

I use Luzern Pure Cleansing Gelee, £32 - it contains cucumber, which is great for soothing sensitive skin. Then I follow up with Osmosis Clear + Activating Hydration Mist, £17.50. Toning



THE CLEAN

CONTINUE IN TRANSIT

My skin breaks out every time I get on a plane, so I try to keep it nourished with face masks. I use sleep masks on long-haul flights and then a quick 10-minute one as soon as I land. [ELLE loves Erborian Sleeping BB Mask, £36.]

FIND A GAME-CHANGER

For me, it's the Beauty Blender, £16. It's a make-up blending tool that works so much faster than brushes and, because it's sponge, you never have to worry about looking streaky.



BE CHEEKY

I use Bobbi Brown Shimmer Brick in Bronze, £33, then I apply its Pot Rouge in Pale Pink, £19.50, to the apples of my cheeks for a healthy flush.

visit elleuk.com/beauty

MAINTAIN HEALTHY HAIR

I swear by Leonor Greyl shampoo, £23.50. I had a shoot where they bleached my hair and it just died. Then I started using Leonor Greyl's shampoo, serum and hair mask, and the health of my hair changed completely.

301



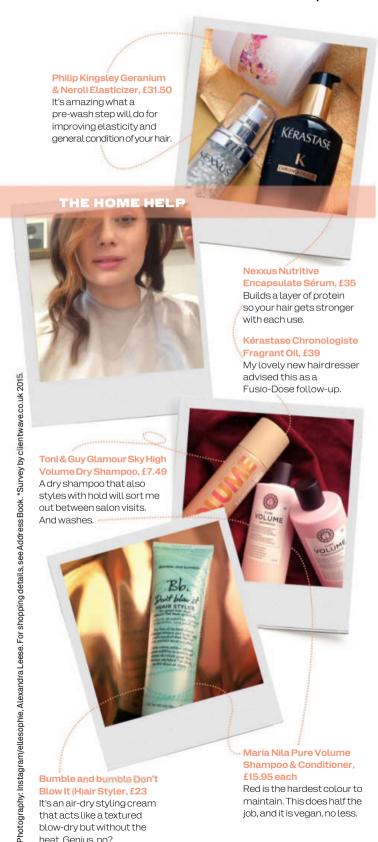




Fear and lathering

Over 75% of women are terrified of the hairdresser*.

This does not surprise ELLE's Beauty Director Sophie Beresiner



nfortunately for me (and my husband, who has to look at me on a daily basis) my 'beauty expert' status does not extend to my own hair. It is a mystery to me - unpredictable, fiddly, bothersome and boring. I put off going to the salon just like everyone else does. This is partly due to my busy schedule, but mostly a dark secret that I am about to share: I am somewhat intimidated by the hairdresser. I'm afraid of being judged by my split ends, my visible roots, my waaaay longer than six-week break between appointments (who really goes every six weeks, really?). I shrink in my chair and make authoritative small talk and more often than not pretend to do VERY IMPORTANT work emails (In reality? I'm WhatsApping my friends).

And then there is the wash: it is perilous. I have had nerves trapped in my neck that paralysed my fingers, and still I was too polite to say anything. And if you are comfortable (Hershesons offers a flatbed option - it is genius), then you are anxious that you won't get the massage you paid over the odds for. The dismay at having an ordinary shampoo is extreme: I could have washed my own hair at home, damn you. Oh, and then the intimacy issue. If you've ever had a straight male hairdresser give you an excellent slow head massage, you'll know what I mean. Toe-curling, in both a good and a bad way. Finally, there's the cut or colour that we will always say we love even though we are dying inside.

Sound familiar? We need to get a grip and realise that hairdressers want us to have an amazing experience - it's just that sometimes they need to know that the result isn't what we hoped for.

All is not lost. I have found something that is exciting for many reasons. Firstly, it came from a place of salon research, which means it's what the people want. Secondly, it makes your hair lovelier for longer. So, by my reckoning, I can go longer between appointments. Result! Kérastase Fusio-Dose (£15, available at Kérastase salons nationwide) is a personalised cocktail of ingredients, like a bonus bolt-on, that is applied during the wash, with a massage that is neither too intimate nor too lacklustre, and treats hair to exactly what it requires. It's a highly personalised service that involves properly communicating your needs. You are so much more than another generic head of hair to talk about holidays with. It also means your hair immediately gets what it needs and looks that way for about seven washes. It doesn't quite absolve my trepidation entirely, but it's a solid first step. And I'm still maintaining long breaks with my home arsenal of products.

blow-dry but without the heat. Genius, no?



217 cals

Martini 73 cals

for

Eggnog 230ml = 344 cals

Baileys and milk 250ml = 163 cals

MEET YOUR NEW SUPERFOOD

Ciao (for now), kale. Cordyceps mushrooms are our new go-to, thanks to their energyand immune-boosting properties. And now they're making their way into our skincare, too. Try Bobbi Brown Intensive Skin Serum Foundation, £39, which contains cordyceps extract, and Dr Andrew Weil for Origins

Micellar Skin Relief Cleanser, £27.50.

Mega-Mushroom

Clockwise, from top: Body-popping calls for serious support. Keep everything in check with this Berlei High Performance Bra, £32. It's a cult fave in Australia, and has just launched in the UK. Look the part in this Monreal London Curacao Performance Blouson Jacket, £285, and a pair of New Balance 420 Tokyo Design Studio Collection Trainers, £70. They're available in leopard- and snake-print for <mark>those who want to tak</mark>e a walk on the wild side. Asos is now stocking American label Varley. Its Sofia Compression Leggings, £74, make working out stylish and fun.



#ELLETEAMFIT TRIES THE BEST DANCE CLASSES









TONE N TWERK

WHERE: Gymbox, London; gymbox.com EXPECT: A bit of Nicki, a dash of Miley and a whole lot of Beyoncé. Warning: the hip-hop choreography calls for natural rhythm.

BARRE

WHERE: Virgin Active, nationwide; virginactive.co.uk **EXPECT:** A spin on your typical barre classes. This is more a fusion of classical ballet moves with Pilates, yoga and contemporary dance.

80s AEROBICS

WHERE: Frame, Shoreditch; moveyourframe.com **EXPECT:** A scene from Olivia Newton-John's Physical. Before vou write it off as just a fun boogie around the room, let us assure you that your blood will be pumping.

CLUBBERCISE

WHERE: Various, nationwide; clubbercise.com **EXPECT:** Glow sticks and loud music make this feel more like a night out than a workout. Plus. nobody can see if you're getting the moves wrong.







THE PERFECT FIT

ᢧ@kenyanhunt

HOW TO GET UP AND DANCE, BY ONE GIRL WHO JUST NEEDS A BEAT, AND ONE WHO TAKES

A FEW RUM AND COKES TO GET MOVING

THIS GIRL CAN

BY KENYA HUNT



I'm not going to lie. I can dance. I can tour jeté to Debussy (I began my classical ballet training at the age of three), twerk to Fela Kuti, drop it like it's hot to Kanye, vogue to Disclosure, dutty wine to Rihan-

na, and whip and nae nae (Google it). Yes, when I'm in the mood, I have been known to turn it out. For me, it's always been less about burning calories or body sculpting - though that's a major plus too. No, I love the pure emotional and mental high. Whether I'm at a barre or in a club, dancing simply feels good.

When I was a university student, juggling a magazine internship with dance classes and auditions, I'd tie my hair up in a bun, slip on my unitard and transform into a different persona depending on what the choreography demanded. I could be wild, haughty and reckless - qualities a relatively reserved person like me would rarely explore otherwise. And when I interviewed a newly solo Beyoncé a few years later and she told me about her kickass, on-stage alter-ego Sasha Fierce (the first time she'd ever publicly talked about her), I understood where she was coming from. My experiences of dancing taught me a unique kind of confidence and self-assuredness that can't come from any office - when you can do a pirouette and a death drop in heels, you really do feel like you can take on the world.

This past spring, I began my dance training again, after having lost track of it during my first years of parenthood. In service of our Editor-in-Chief and #ELLEFit, I took a Lester Horton-technique class to reacquaint myself with my own Sasha Fierce, a person I'll call K-Boogie. And it was hard. I couldn't

TO DEBUSSY. TWERK TO FFI A KUTI. DROP KANYE. VOGUE AND WHIP AND NAF NAE (GOOGLE IT)'

hold my leg ear-high (or even shoul-'ICANTOUR JETE der-high!) the way I have in the past. My turns weren't as sharp. My jumps weren't as precise. I got winded. But I was ridiculously IT LIKE IT'S HOT TO happy - giddy, even. I felt empowered. And having to learn intricate floor combinations I haven't tried TO DISCLOSURE, in years was better than any Brain Training app I could ever download. That's because dancing improves cerebral and cognitive thought functions. I was hooked.

Now, I'm back to shaking my money-maker right in time for the party season. And, full disclosure: I never really ever stopped twerking. What can I say: some people sing in the shower, I dance to Beyoncé's Blow in the living room. And I'm more smiley, with stronger abs and a clearer mind, because of it. So who's down to do the whip with me? Sophie. you know you want to! See you on the dance floor.

THIS GIRL CAN'T BE BOTHERED

BY SOPHIE BERESINER



So it turns out there is a very specific bonus to winter months that counteracts all the extra eating and drinking we do. Well, I do, anyway. And that is dancing. This crazy flinging of body parts

that accompanies sequined dresses and high spirits - both the emotional and alcoholic kind - is also an accidental workout.

At last, a workout I genuinely enjoy! Particularly if it happens between the hours of 10pm and 2am. And depending on the brand of dancing you subscribe

'AT LAST. A WORKOUT I FN JOY! PARTICULARLY IF IT HAPPENS BETWEEN 10PM AND 2AM'

to, it burns upwards of 450 calories an hour. (In case you're interested: hip-hop burns the most, belly dancing the least. Now you know.) Oh, but hang on. I'm dancing on a night out. I've probably consumed at least a couple of drinks to get me on the dance floor in the first place,

but let's disregard those for a moment. Say I have two rum and Cokes in the hour I'm dancing, that's about 400 calories to counterbalance the bonus ones I'm burning off. I need to take drinking out of this not-so-happy equation. Damn it.

So how about daytime? In my wildest fantasies, I can breakdance at a wedding, or even in front of a small crowd at Piccadilly Circus. In reality, I'm going to start with a Street Dance Class at Fitness First. I've honestly been meaning to do it since Ashley Banjo from dance troupe Diversity choreographed a full aerobic street class a couple of years ago. It's only the agonising shame that is holding me back. Imagine the cringe factor of a 35-year-old woman body-popping on a blue mat at the back. Nope. I'm going to have to stick to YouTube tutorials and the Diversity DVD. OK, Jillian Michaels' 30-Day Shred - much less embarrassing if the husband walks in on me. Scrap that, actually: Davina's 7 Minute Fit programme so I can fit it around dinner and work. The problem is that the TV is in front of the sofa, and the sofa is so much more inviting. Sod it, I'm going to go out and dance my sequined socks off. I can always have a rum and Diet Coke instead.



#ELLEFIT For more fitness inspiration, visit elleuk.com/beauty/ health-fitness

▶ @I LOVE LIPSTICK



9@SCARCURTIS

Dress yourself better

After years of suffering from chronic pain and depression, **Scarlett Curtis** finally felt well enough to wear something other than her pyjamas, and discovered that looking good and feeling good are more connected than she realised

Photography Jan Welters

or a very long time, clothes were pretty much the last thing in the world I could think about. The wardrobe of someone who is ill, sad, or doesn't tend to leave the house very much can be a sorry affair. For years I would change, every morning, out of my nighttime pyjamas into my daytime pyjamas to ready myself for yet another day of being bed-bound and in pain, resulting in a nightwear collection that outgrew the bottom drawer and required an entire wardrobe for itself.

If our teens are a practice run for the rest of our lives, a chance to get all the bad outfit choices, alcohol poisoning and painful young romances out of the way before emerging into womanhood with an armour of life tools and nice boots, mine left me entirely unprepared. At 14, I was

left in chronic pain after an operation on my back went wrong. Three years of not being able to walk much further than the end of my road (and it's not a very long road) were followed by two years of crippling depression and anxiety, which once again flung me into a petrified, bed-bound state.

In a few weeks, I went from being a 'normal' teenage girl on a constant mission to see how short a skirt I could get away with and saving up for a new pair of Topshop hotpants (with 'pants' being the operative word), to a miserable recluse barely discernible in a puddle of baggy grey clothes. Day after day in my bedroom, I experienced fashion vicariously via the internet and TV. I would spend hours artfully curating Pinterest boards of everything I would wear once I got 'better'. My walls were covered with collages of beautiful things from the 'real world' that I yearned for.

One thing my years of relative seclusion did not prepare me for was how to dress myself. I had missed years of experimenting with what fashion meant to me, that reckless and necessary process of deciding what your clothes are going to say about you, what face you're going to show to the world. Anything I knew about clothes came from the TV shows or films I was obsessed with, and the reality of dressing for a world where my clothes were suddenly a statement about my personality felt daunting.

It's easy to think of clothes as things that only touch the surface, ignoring the reality that every decision that we make in the early hours of each morning is a statement, a shout into the void about who we are or who we want to be. Our clothes are the chainmail we put on daily to arm ourselves against the battle that is life and, as I begin to transition back into normal life, no longer confined to the prison of mental or physical illness, I find myself struggling with this very connection; the unbreakable bond between how I feel and what I'm wearing.

For a long time, the way I dressed was defined by my illness. The agony in my back meant any fabric touching it felt like razor blades and as a result my wardrobe became a symbol of my discomfort. Morose black jumpers to drown my aching body, black leggings, baggy T-shirts and pyjama shorts were my go-to ensemble. When I did leave the house, I felt an aggressive need to

mask the sadness of what I was going through, to wear a disguise so no one knew how bad things were inside. I wore a headband with cat ears every day for a year, in the misguided belief that comical headwear would distract from the angsty brain underneath. At this point, I was in school part-time, and as you can imagine, my fondness for animal-themed headwear and year-round Christmas jumpers didn't do wonders for my social life.

At 19, having spent six years watching nothing but *Friends*, *Girls* and *Sex and the City*, I became convinced the only thing I needed to get 'better' was to move from London to New York. I set off for the most fashionable city on the planet armed with 10 pairs of PJs, three

I would change, every morning, out of my nighttime pyjamas into my daytime pyjamas for yet another day of being bed-bound and in pain'

Christmas jumpers and absolutely no idea about how it was going to turn out. Now, at 20, studying English Literature at NYU and living in the West Village, I've had a year and a half of frozen winter nights, 99-cent pizza, and a realisation that 'better' is something far more transient and undefinable than I'd ever previously imagined. I find myself still fairly anxious, but happier and stronger than I've been in years.

Weaning myself off my 'sick' wardrobe has been a challenge. It started pretty much as soon as I moved to New York, the simultaneous dawning realisation that I was in fact not going to be able to wear pyjamas to class and that going to university in the city meant most students looked more like they'd just walked off a runway than out of a bedbug-ridden dorm building. For the first few months all I wanted was to look like everyone else. I spent hours scouring Instagram and Facebook, trying to figure out how the women I admired - Lena Dunham and Mindy Kaling - did this 'style' thing. I felt I could manage to pull together an outfit once in a while, but the trouble with dressing oneself seemed to be that you had to do it every day. I found an

outfit I liked: a black denim skirt and a black top from Topshop, which I wore almost daily, falling back to my baggy jumpers any time it was in the wash.

I slowly began to find a few more things I felt comfortable in. A black Bella Freud *Ginsberg Is God* jumper, a Topshop denim dress, and an American Apparel co-ord that tricked me into feeling like I was wearing pyjamas.

I still find shopping stressful. The overwhelming number of options and bright lights make me want to give up and run back home. But, much like any sport, the more I practice, the better I get, and the thrill of walking down the street in a brand new pair of pompom-adorned silver shoes is worth braving the intimidating SoHo crowds for.

My life is changing. I have a crush, I go on dates, I have new friends and a cafe I like to go to on the weekends. All these things require clothes and a million tiny decisions on my behalf, of who I'm going to be now that the darkness is over. Two months ago, in a fit of desperation to somehow speed up the development on my personal taste, I bleached my hair pastel pink, and a week later bought a burgundy corduroy coat with a fluffy blue hood. As the bleach permeated my scalp, I felt a lurch of regret. I've always had brown hair -I am a person with brown hair. Without my brown hair, I was no longer going to look like me. But as the dye washed out and my new candyfloss locks emerged, it dawned on me, probably too late, that I really did have the freedom now to look like whoever I wanted to.

I also started looking outwards and realised all the women around me who I assumed came out of the womb knowing exactly how to dress were also making decisions every day about what they wore - and that those decisions, even if only in the smallest way, were affecting how they felt as they lived their lives. I have by no means figured out my sense of style, and the overwhelming volume of pyjamas and knitwear still outbalances the rest of my wardrobe, but I'm on my way to understanding the kind of person I want to be, and it's up to me to discover exactly what she wears.

READ IT Read more from ELLE's New York Editor, Scarlett Curtis, on elleuk.com/tags/ellevoices

ELLE PROMOTION





Dawn till dusk

As a model, Anelia Moor needs beauty products she can trust - all day, every day. Enter the new **B.** make-up and skincare ranges from **Superdrug**

BEAUTY BOOST #1

FIRST THINGS FIRST

'My day doesn't start until I cleanse and moisturise my skin,' says Anelia. 'To have clear, blemish-free skin is super important for me; as a model it's a requirement of my job!' B. Clean Melting Gel Cleanser, £6.99, for gentle yet effective deepcleansing. B. Confident Day Cream, £9.99, to help fortify and protect skin. B. Confident Blemish Serum, £6.99, to help improve the appearance of imperfections and rebalance skin



Travelling for work means Anelia's skin regularly has to adjust to different climates and routines. B. skincare is so comprehensive, there's always a product to suit







'I prefer natural-looking make-up so I tend to choose bronze, brown and nude colours for a fresh look,' says Anelia. 'That said, I do like a pop of colour on nights out - a great red lipstick helps get me in the party mood.' B. Prepared Anti-Blemish Make-Up Primer, £9.99, for perfectly-prepped skin. B. Sculpted Blush & Highlight Stick, £10.99, to bring a flush of colour and highlight cheekbones in one easy sweep.
B. Kissable Cult Lip shades £9.99, for a statement pout



BEAUTY BOOST #3

SAY GOODNIGHT

'My skin has to put up with a lot: I'm rigorous when it comes to cleansing and moisturising in the evenings,' says Anelia.

B. Pure Micellar Water,
£4.99, for 3-in-1 cleansing in a single sweep. B. Confident
Moisture Gel, £9.99, to replenish skin without oiliness or clogging pores. B. Revealed Glycolic Cleansing Peel,
£7.99, to leave skin looking and feeling expertly clean, fresh and smooth



B. IS FOR BEAUTIFUL The new B. make-up and skincare ranges from Superdrug contain everything you need to create a brilliant beauty routine that's perfectly tailored to you. To discover your perfect beauty boost and for a little beauty inspiration, take the test and find out more about all the products in the range at **bisforbeautiful.com**

RADIANCE







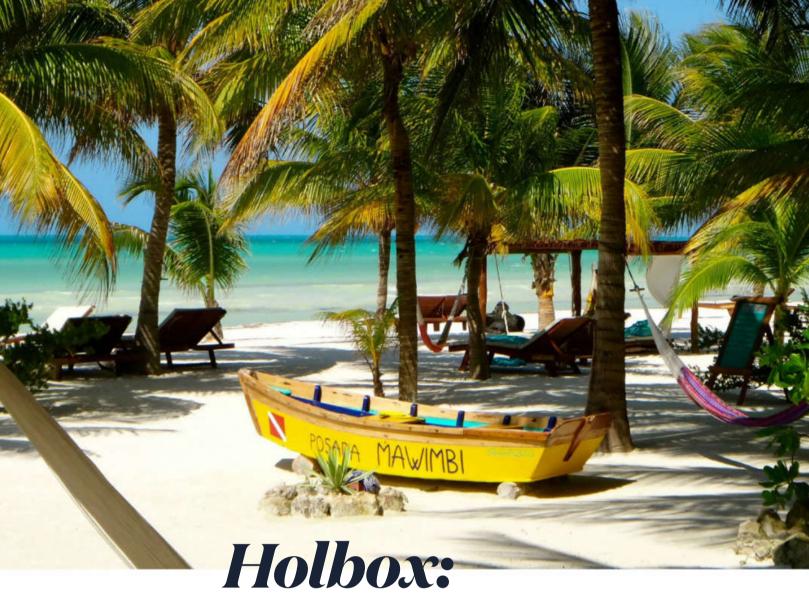


TRAVEL



Dream it > see it > book it





THE NEW MEXICAN HOTSPOT

Forget celeb favourite Tulum. Just off the Mexican coast, Emily Eades discovers a tiny island with lagoon-like water (but don't tell anyone, it's a secret)



It's late afternoon. The sun is just beginning to sink into an inky sea, couples rise from loungers and hop across still-hot sand into the water. Not quite ready for so much action, I shift myself from horizontal to a 90-degree angle – it's piña colada o'clock and I'm yet to master drinking while prostrate.

Today was supposed to be the day I explored Holbox by bike, took a paddle-board lesson and tried to eat something other than ceviche for lunch. I've failed spectacularly on all counts. This tiny island has succeeded in doing something no other holiday has managed – to lull my usually restless body into an entirely brilliant state of lethargy. Granted, the mid-afternoon cocktails are helping. Resistance is futile.





Fifty feet of soft white sand are all that's separating our room from the pin-drop calm water



I landed in Mexico a week ago with my husband, Craig, and we headed straight for Tulum, 75 miles south of Cancún. Once a little village and hippie backpacking spot that grew around its famous beachfront Mayan ruin, it popped up on the fashion radar about 20 years ago, when photographer Enrique Badulescu bought a house there. Mario Testino followed suit 10 years later, and it became a shoot-location favourite, gradually turning into New-York-Fashion-Weekon-sea at Christmas, with its off-grid eco vibe, and little boho beachfront hotels and organic restaurants cropping up along the white sands.

But while Tulum is still undeniably magical, the experience of spotting a Starbucks almost in the Mayan ruins, then nearly getting third-degree burns while queuing in the midday heat for Hartwood (its restaurant of the moment) we felt ready to wave goodbye in search of a paradise rather more untouched. A tip from a well-travelled friend, and hours spent trawling through under-the-radar travel blogs, had us packing up and heading to Isla Holbox.

visible across the water. We miss, by seconds, one of the regular daily ferries leaving the mainland. But no matter - we climb into the boat of an enterprising fisherman, who offers to take us over in his dug-out. The holiday hordes of Tulum feel a world away.

We bounce over the waves, flying fish darting around the boat, watching the water turn from dark blue to the kind of aquamarine that has you scrabbling to break your 'no Instagram on holiday' pact. Unlike Tulum's choppy coast, Holbox lies in the merging waters of the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico, giving the sea here a mirror-like flatness. It takes all my strength not to dive in fully clothed.

Our fisherman tethers the boat to a clapboard jetty, and children scrabble to help us out. The island has no cars: just multicoloured bikes, golf carts and sunshine-yellow buggies, taxiing people from pillar to post. We make like locals and climb aboard. A network of sandy streets connects the harbour, shoreline and town square, and we trundle past squat, candy-hued buildings, thatched cantinas and fishermen unravelling bundles of net. Brightly hued street art catches our attention - 6oft portraits and elaborate underwater scenes, striking legacies of the International Public Art Festival held on the island in April.>









Above: La Isla Del Colibri bar. Below: A beachfront room in Hotel Mawimbi Our home for the week is Hotel Mawimbi, a nine-room boutique retreat built by husband and wife team Carmelo and Ornella in 1998. Our banana-yellow cabana is a study in quiet luxury whitewashed stone interiors,

A flock of

birds crosses

our path—the

first flamingo

of the season

thick white bed linen, furnishings bedecked with folkloric fabrics (that I immediately want to steal), and a light-filled bathroom with organic toiletries. Outside, hammocks are strung between trees and an outdoor restaurant serves lime-drenched prawn tostadas and fist-size frozen margaritas. On first

sight, the view from our room is so stunning I actually tear up. 'Er, my sunburn still hurts,' I proffer, as Craig looks at me, bewildered. Then we bound like excited puppies into the sea – 50 feet of soft white sand are all that's separating our room from the pin-drop calm water.

Time on Holbox passes at a deliciously slow pace. We get up at dawn when the

air is cool. Craig jogs each morning along the beach, while I try to capture how beautiful the setting is on my camera. Breakfast follows - watermelon juice, sweet toasted bread and pineapple marmalade. Then we pick

our queen-size loungers and retreat into the shade with books, a cocktail menu, and a vague plan to 'break' for lunch.

On the days when we can muster the energy, we amble south along the shoreline. On this stretch, there's a hut advertising beach massages, some rudimentary campsites and a margarita bar with swings instead of seats.

Come evening, sunsets are the star attraction, drawing islanders to the water's edge each evening. Under slowly-turning-raspberry skies, we sip margaritas, sway in hammocks and discuss whether or not we have the energy for Mawimbi's rooftop yoga in the morning.

As night falls, a crisscross of broad-billed pelicans and swallows gives way to the swooping and dipping of bats. Along the waterfront, plastic-seated shacks serve great platters of fresh seafood, while in town the square is a bustle of pretty restaurants, coloured fairy lights and steaming churros stalls. We quickly fall for the pink, thatched La Isla Del Colibri bar, returning twice for potent frozen margaritas and coconut prawns. El Chapulim also gets a repeat visit,



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with its menu based around the catch of the day. Chef Erik personally greets each customer, animatedly talking through his four daily dishes before disappearing inside to cook. At a rickety table, we eat freshly caught bream with craft beer from a microbrewery on the mainland.

Energised from one too many tequila cocktails, we tipsily book a kayak trip for sunrise and arrive the next morning bleary-eyed and anxious at the sight of the uncharacteristically choppy sea. Our guide Andres sees no issue, and hangovers soon give way to fear as we navigate angry rolling waves in an attempt to reach the mangroves beyond. It takes 15 steely minutes until I'm brave enough to peer over the kayak's edge. The water, it turns out, is no more than 4ft deep. Not only shallow enough for me to stand in, but also clear enough for us to spot helmet crabs and stingrays skating along the seabed. Once across the open water, we paddle gently through sun-drenched mangroves towards Crocodile Quay, a fledgling eco project, where we watch crocodiles and turtles snoozing in the sunshine.

As we prepare for the return leg, a flock of incoming birds crosses our path - the first flamingos of the season. We all watch, mesmerised, as they come in to land, sugar pink and elegant, with Kate Moss-esque legs protruding from the sea.

Salt-sore, water-whipped and weary, we make a beeline for the island's highest point as soon as we're back on dry land. At three storeys, Hotel Arena has unrivalled panoramic views of the island and, wonderfully for us, an alfresco bar. We order star anise-studded margaritas and watch the day turn to night.



GETTING THERE

British Airways, ba.com, has return flights to Cancún from London Heathrow, from around £500. Buses to/from Canciún take three hours: single £10. Ferries to Holbox leave regularly from 6am-9.30pm daily, taking 30 minutes: £4 return.

STAY

Hotel Posada Mawimbi

Calle Igualdad, Manzana 1 Lote 1, Holbox Island; +52 984 875 2003; mawimbi.net, Doubles from £58, B&B

EAT AND DRINK

La Isla Del Colibr

Calle Tiburon Ballena, Holbox Island; +52 984 875 2162; facebook.com/colibri.islaholbox

Avenida Tiburon Ballena. Downtown Holbox; + 52 984 137 6069

Calle Iqualdad, Manzana 11 ote 2. Holbox Island, +52 984 875 2129; holboxcasalastortugas.com

Hotel Arena

Tiburón Ballena, Holbox Island; hotelarenaholbox.com

Mandarina

Above Casa Las Tortugas, Calle Igualdad, Manzana 1 Lote 2, Holbox Island: +52 984 875 2129: holboxcasalastortugas.com

SHOP

US dollars are accepted but Mexican pesos are preferred. Bring plenty of cash – there is only one ATM and it regularly runs out of money.

RFL AX

The stylish Casa Las Tortugas beach club contains a rooftop cocktail bar and chic restaurant hidden away among the palms. Start with a mezcal sour sundowner at its bar, Mandarina. Downstairs, the club-restaurant is all beautiful people, billowing white canopies, delicate Mediterranean menu and crisp sauvignon. The club has plans to add an artist residency retreat and patisserie to its already elegant blueprint.

Go swimming with the whale sharks that come to feast in the plankton-rich water offshore. Time your visit, as they arrive around May and leave again in September. Arranged at Hotel Mawimbi directly with Andrés Limón. £10 pp; call +52 984 875 2003 to book.

BEST TIME TO GO

High season runs from May to September coinciding with the annual appearance of the rare whale shark. but the weather is good all year. Arrive December to April to avoid mosquitos (ferocious at sunset. otherwise manageable).

PACKING ESSENTIALS

Think Ibiza style: Isabel Marant Étoile loose boho tops, kaftans, pretty Greek sandals, plenty of Heidi Klein swimwear, Kate Spade beach bags. In high season, remember mosquito repellent and full-length. light-coloured clothes to keep the little critters at bay.



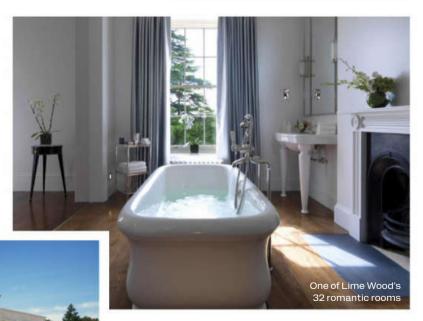


MARTINDALE, PENROSE, CORNWALL

Tucked down a narrow road in the hamlet of Penrose, about five miles from Padstow, the secluded Martindale cottage has recently been revamped by interior decorator Jill Stein, ex-wife of Cornwall's culinary hero, Rick Stein. The selfcatering cottage, with four double bedrooms, has a sweet garden with a gas barbecue and outdoor seating, and the hamper of local cheese and bottle of wine you'll find waiting for you will make it easy to unwind. Guests get 10% off breakfast at Rick Stein's Café in nearby Padstow.

Martindale, Penrose, Cornwall, PL27 7TB; 01841 532 700; rickstein.com/ stay/martindale. Three-night stays from £830, sleeps eight





DO IT
See more stylish boltholes
at elleuk.com/travel

LIME WOOD, HAMPSHIRE

The stylish older sister of the phenomenally successful Pig hotel group, Lime Wood stands elegantly in beautiful New Forest surroundings. Once a medieval hunting lodge, it has been transformed into the perfect escape-to-thecountry retreat, with 32 rooms and suites. Luke Holder and the Michelin-starred Angela Hartnett triumph in the kitchen, serving inventive Italian food (pork belly, parsley root and apple remoulade; pea and ricotta agnolotti). The Herb House spa, with its sauna, hydrotherapy pool and marble mud house, is a must-try: who knew smearing clay on your partner could be so much fun?

Lime Wood, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst, Hampshire, SO43 7FZ; 023 8028 7177; limewoodhotel.co.uk. Doubles from £255, room only

320





COWLEY MANOR, COTSWOLDS

Life doesn't get more period drama than Cowley Manor in the Cotswolds. Set in 55 acres of lakes, meadows and woodland, this 30-room hotel and spa is famous for its gardens, natural springs and Victorian cascades. The setting may be refined but the vibe is informal, with relaxed lounge areas, a billiards room. a terrace, and an indoor/ outdoor pool - a feat of clever landscaping. Take a walk through the grounds, feast on a fully stocked picnic hamper in one of the private garden enclaves, and unwind with a swim and a spa treatment before you head for dinner at the hotel's new restaurant. Malt. The turbot ceviche and bayette of beef are a must. Cowley Manor, Cowley, near Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 9NL; 01242 870 900;

cowleymanor.com. Doubles from £195, room only

BOTELET FARM. CORNWALL

The Manor Cottage at Botelet Farm was once part of a traditional Cornish longhouse, and is mentioned in the 1068 Domesday Book. Cosy up by the wood-burner with a cream tea before a hike into the surrounding countryside. Perfectly placed for trips to fishing villages or beaches, Botelet is a mix of modern facilities and old-fashioned comfyness, and nothing is too much trouble for the owners, whose family has lived here since 1865. Don't leave without a relaxing massage from co-owner/ masseuse Tia Tamblyn. Botelet Farm, Herodsfoot, Cornwall. PL14 4RD; 01503 220 225; botelet.com.

Doubles from £100, B&B

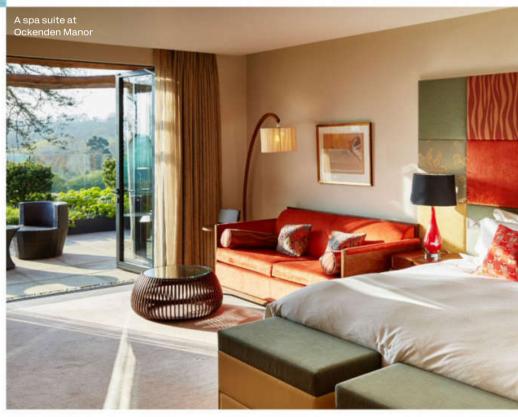




OCKENDEN MANOR. **WEST SUSSEX**

Nothing says 'weekend away' quite like a 16th-century manor set in nine acres of parkland. The 28 rooms and suites (oak panelling, original Tudor ceilings, open fires) range from dark boudoirs with four-posters to light bedrooms with fresh country chintz. Some have no shower, only a bath (so specify on booking), and for a real treat, book one of the spa suites, which open on to a private garden terrace. The spa is contemporary, with a wonderful swim-through indoor/outdoor pool, steam room, and Ren and Ila treatments. Chef Stephen Crane won a Michelin star for his dishes, so foodies are in good hands.

Ockenden Manor Hotel & Spa, Ockenden Lane, West Sussex, RH17 5LD; 01444 416 111; hshotels.co.uk. Doubles from £179, B&B



THE BAR

The memorabilia-packed American Bar was a hangout for US servicemen during the war, and the wine cellar, which once doubled as an air-raid shelter, holds 8,000 bottles, so there's no chance of going thirsty.

THE VIBE

It's refined, elegant and exceedingly English, so it would be perfect for a deluxe afternoon tea with your mum or a quiet romantic city break with your partner. Think grand but cosseting: marble baths that fill within minutes and armchairs you can lose hours in.

The penthouse suite comes with a study, terrace and butler service



The Stafford certainly has flashy neighbours – it's just behind The Ritz and Buckingham Palace is only a few minutes' walk away – but it is surprisingly discreet and low-key for a five-star central London establishment. Tucked down an alley off Green Park, the 105-room hotel is neither supercool nor celebrity-packed, and there's no fancy spa or hipster bar – but we love it for that. Instead, it's all about traditional British luxury and impeccable service. The staff are helpful without being overbearing, especially the brilliant concierges, who have black-cabdriver levels of city knowledge.

HANDY FOR

What isn't it handy for? If you want shopping, Bond Street is just a few minutes away. Enjoy running? Take a turn around the undulating pathways of Green Park. Or for a culture fix, it's a short walk to the Royal Academy of Arts, where you can catch the Ai Weiwei retrospective until 13 December.



THE FOOD

The Lyttelton Restaurant has a formal feel with its starched tablecloths and large chandeliers. It focuses on British produce, such as Cornish mackerel and Suffolk pork belly, and our English breakfast was flawless - the poached eggs were the best we've ever had.

The Stafford, 16-18 St James's Place, London SW1A 1NJ; 020 7493 0111; the stafford london.com. Doubles from £335, room only



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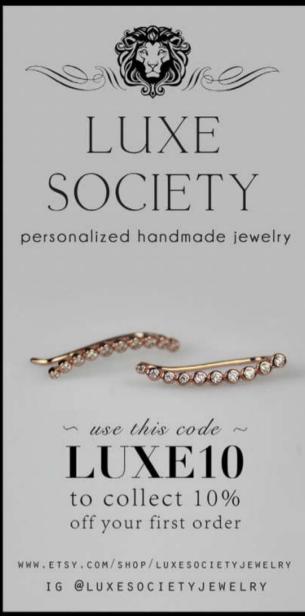
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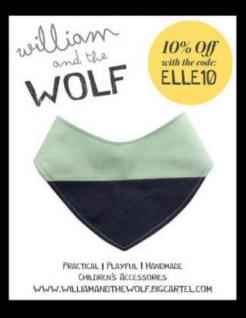
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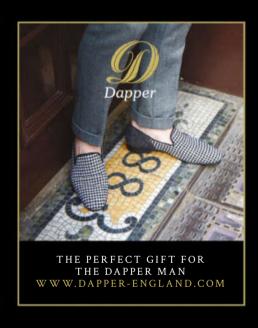
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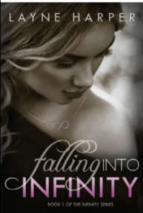


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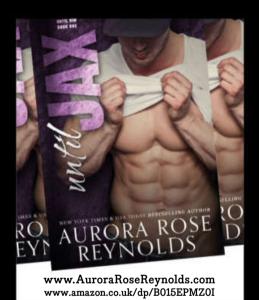


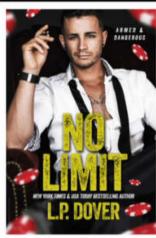
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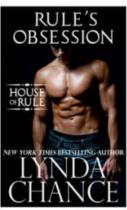
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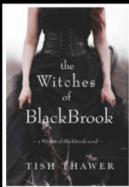


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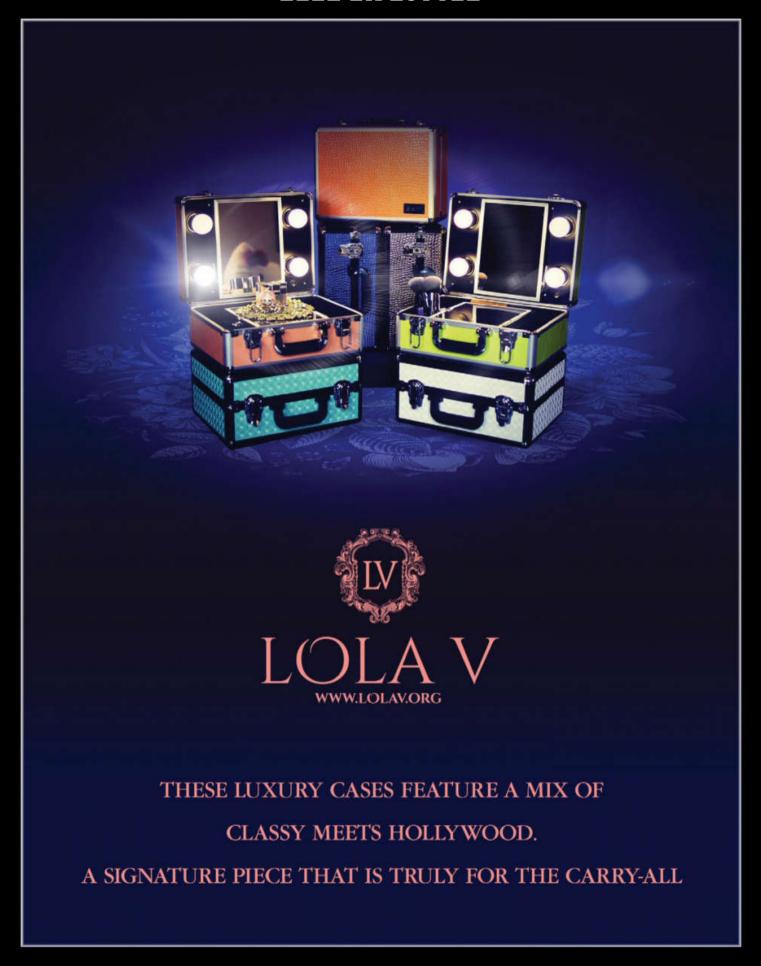
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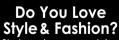
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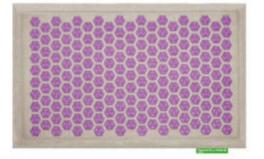
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